

AECO'S GUIDELINES FOR EXPEDITION CRUISE OPERATIONS IN THE ARCTIC

PREFACE

AECO is an international organization for expedition cruise operators. We are dedicated to managing respectable, environmentally-friendly and safe expedition cruising in the Arctic. The members agree that expedition cruises and tourism must be carried out with the utmost consideration for the fragile, natural environment, local cultures and cultural remains, as well as the challenging safety hazards at sea and on land. AECO-members are obligated to operate in accordance with national and international laws and regulations and agreed upon AECO by-laws and guidelines.

Parts of the guidelines have been developed for use in tour planning, preparation and operation by the tour operational office of AECO members. Other parts are tools to be understood and implemented by expedition staff working in the field in Svalbard. All visitors, staff or crew from AECO members' ships must act in accordance with legal regulations as well as the AECO guidelines. The guidelines do not in any way replace official laws and regulations or the need to know these regulations.

The guidelines are a dynamic set of tools that will develop with experience and knowledge as well as reflecting new regulations and conditions.

The Guidelines have been developed with considerable input from the Governor of Svalbard, The Norwegian Polar Institute, WWF's Arctic Program Office, as well as Greenland Tourism, Greenland Directorate of Environment and nature and others. These contributing institutions are not responsible for the correctness of the content, or the point of view AECO has taken on subjective matters in the guidelines.

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1. AECO RESPONSIBILITIES

The AECO guidelines are tools for the organization of respectable, environmentally-friendly and safe expedition cruising in the Arctic by the members. The guidelines are intended to support AECO members in their efforts to give their visitors memorable and safe experiences of the Arctic's unique and fragile nature, wildlife, cultures and cultural remains. The guidelines are also intended to support the protection of the environment and respect for and benefits to local communities.

Tourism, cruise and shipping activities in the Arctic operate within a comprehensive framework of international and national laws and regulations to ensure safety and preservation of the environment. Nevertheless, there is a need for operators to take responsibility for their activities and actions both within formal laws and regulations, and also where these regulations do not reach or define all aspects of their activities.

The expedition cruises conducted by all AECO members represent the sole means of access to the public (except for the very resourceful few) to the more remote areas of the Arctic. We believe that access to these areas should be kept open to the public, unless very strong reasons require closure of some kind. AECO believes that the best way to secure access to the tourist operators is through professional and sound organization and management. AECO members are prepared to take responsibility for their part of this management by operating according to laws and regulations, and through implementation of self-regulation.

All AECO-members already work according to a large set of operating manuals and internal guidelines, and in accordance with existing laws and regulations. The AECO- guidelines are not meant to replace member companies' operating manuals, but to supplement and strengthen the set of available management tools. We also appreciate that the individual member companies might focus on specific aspects of the arctic experience and environment through theme programs, and that this might put more emphasis on specific areas of for example, environmental protection, than what is specified in the AECO-guidelines.

2. LEGISLATION

2.1 INTERNATIONAL

Maritime operations of ships and cruise activities are regulated through national and international legislation, in particular the comprehensive convention-system adopted by the UN-organisation IMO

(International Maritime Organisation) concerning safety at sea (SOLAS and others), pollution (MARPOL etc), management systems (ISM-code etc) and liability.

Members of AECO must ensure that ships owned or chartered by members are operated according to relevant maritime international and local laws and regulations. In addition members of AECO:

- strongly recommend, where possible, members to use distilled fuel oil during all operations in the Arctic
- encourage the use of lower emission outboard engines

Members of AECO must ensure treatment of black and grey water and management of ballast water according to maritime regulations and local environmental regulations.

Site management: In co-operation with the local authorities and others, AECO will work to protect and maintain the environmental quality of landing sites through developing area- and site-management systems including site specific guidelines where needed.

2.2 SVALBARD

The Svalbard archipelago includes all landmasses between 74 and 81 degrees north and between 10 and 35 degrees east, as well as the sea inside a territorial boundary extending 12 nautical miles from land.

Svalbard was a “no-mans land” up until 1925, after which it has been under Norwegian Sovereignty in accordance with the Svalbard Treaty. Travel within Svalbard and cruising in its waters, are subject to Norwegian legislation for the archipelago and is enforced by the Governor of Svalbard (Sysselmannen) in Longyearbyen. International maritime regulations also apply.

Close to 65 % of all land on Svalbard is protected as National Parks, Nature Reserves or other specially protected areas. Activities in these protected areas require special attention. In fact all of Svalbard is regulated and protected with allowances for environmentally sound settlement, research and limited commercial/industrial activity.

The most important legislation regarding environmental protection is the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act of 15 June 2001 that applies to the entire land area of Svalbard with its waters extending out to Norway’s territorial boundary. The Act says: “The person in charge of any undertaking shall ensure that every person who carries out work or takes part in the activities for which an undertaking is responsible, is aware of the provisions set out in or pursuant to this Act regarding the protection of Svalbard’s flora, fauna, cultural heritage and the natural environment otherwise” (§ 5).

2.3 JAN MAYEN

Jan Mayen is a 373 km² island located between 70° and 72° N and 8° and 9° W. The territorial boundary extends 4 nautical miles off land.

Jan Mayen has been a part of the Kingdom of Norway since 1929. Norwegian legislation applies. The Svalbard Treaty does not apply for Jan Mayen.

2.4 GREENLAND

Greenland is the world's largest island, 2 175 600 km². Greenland is a part of the Kingdom of Denmark but has since 1979 had home rule. The territorial boundary extends 3 nautical miles off land.

A comprehensive legislation on nature preservation is relevant knowledge to anyone carrying out activities in Greenland, the most important being Landsting Act No. 29 of 18 December 2003 on the Protection of Nature. There are specific regulations related to protected areas and to the protection and harvest of land - and sea mammals, as well as birds,

Approximately 45 % of Greenland is protected and the national park in North- and East Greenland is regarded as the world's largest national park. National park regulations include a prohibition against visiting without special entrance permission and clauses aimed at protecting flora and fauna. Other protected areas in Greenland include 11 Ramsar-areas and 13 bird sanctuaries. Also be aware that for anyone other than local inhabitants it is prohibited to visit the protected area in Melville Bugt.

3. PLANNING, PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 PLANNING PROCEDURES

Planning procedures must include the following steps:

- Acquire an operational knowledge of laws and regulations regarding environment and safety at sea and land as a base for product development and planning.
- Implement environment and safety considerations at all stages of the planning process.
- Apply local adaptations to cruise/tour programs and itineraries, for instance in order to avoid seasonal bogs during melting-periods, bird-islands during nesting season, bird-rocks during chick-jumping etc.

- Communicate with the local authorities at an early stage when planning new itineraries/products. Send advance notification of your travel plans according to procedures in the regulations and local demands.

3.2 PREPARATION

Preparation for cruise operations must include the following steps:

- Employ staff with relevant experience and in sufficient numbers.
- Define responsibilities and plans of action both for regular operations and for emergency situations.
- Develop systematic staff training at all levels; expedition staff, administration and leadership, in the field and in the home office, of the environmental and safety policies, regulations and guidelines on a general level and on a relevant detailed level for each job/function.
- Ship crews and officers should be made conversant with the main AECO guidelines and policies, in particular where such policies or guidelines affect ships operations that are not covered by maritime regulations.
- Communicate relevant AECO policy and guidelines to visitors, agents and the market place, as well as to authorities, Arctic research communities and the interested general public.
- Co-ordinate sailing schedules and itineraries pre-season to ensure smooth and safe operations, minimising the environmental impacts and enhancing the wilderness experience.

3.3 OPERATIONAL PREPARATIONS

Operational activities must include the following steps:

- Ensure updated contact-information and vessels registrations in AECO's cruise database.
- Operations with vessels carrying 12 or more passengers must be registered with landing plans in AECO's cruise database. Other vessels are encouraged to also register sailing plans.
- Establish contact with and send information/sailing-plans to relevant authorities and local administrative interests – in accordance with national and local requirements.
- Utilise the ships Automatic Identification System (AIS) to identify other vessels in the immediate vicinity and communicate intentions to co-ordinate activities.
- Establish incident-reporting systems related to the environment and safety issues for internal use within each company and for reporting to AECO. Also, ensure that authorities are informed formally when applicable by law or regulation, or otherwise informally, to ensure open communication regarding any issues which may arise.

- Establish reporting procedures for sighting of certain wildlife-species such as whales, walrus ashore, certain birds etc. in co-operation with the Norwegian Polar Institute and/or other interested institutions.
- Maintain regular contact with authorities in the local communities on an informal basis e.g. via the expedition leader visiting the offices of local authorities.

EQUIPMENT

SOLAS approved vessels are required to install and run “AECO’s vessel tracking” when operating in the Arctic.

All other vessels are encouraged to also install and run “AECO’s vessel tracking” when sailing in the Arctic.

AECO has banned a general use of UAV by revenue passengers in the Arctic. Use of UAV’s for special purposes may be decided by the operators within limits of regulations and AECO guidelines. UAVs should not be used to pursue or follow wildlife.

3.4 IMPLEMENTATION OF GUIDELINES

The creation of our AECO Guidelines is a step toward achieving our objectives. To succeed, implementation on all levels within the AECO members’ organisations is a necessity. In particular AECO wants to highlight the role of expedition staff, leaders and guides, and their key function.

1.1.1. External information

- Include AECO information/web-address in written information/letters to guests
- Include the AECO-logo and link to AECO’s web-site on company’s web-site

1.1.2. Staff members

- Educate EL/guides about AECO guidelines
- Require that the EL/guides know and follow the AECO guidelines
- Include the AECO guidelines in internal manuals

1.1.3. Crew members

- Educate crew members prior to sailing season
- Make sure that the AECO guidelines are available on the bridge
- Require that crew-members know and follow the AECO guidelines

1.1.4. On board information

- Use AECO’s general PowerPoint-presentation or similar to inform guests about AECO and AECO guidelines.
- Either hand out AECO guidelines to guests, and/or include AECO guidelines in cabin information and/or hang AECO guidelines on a visible notice board or show on a screen onboard

1.1.5. Recommendations

It is also recommended:

- To include AECO guidelines or link to AECO guidelines on each company's web-site
- To use the AECO guidelines as a basis for internal manuals
- To test EL/guides' knowledge of AECO guidelines
- That ship-owners if possible include AECO guidelines as part of ship ISM

3.5 MARKETING

Members of AECO should be very conservative when using images for advertising that can be misinterpreted by the public and authorities alike. Some images may be interpreted as a breach of the guidelines.

4. ENVIROMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS AND SAFETY

The guidelines below are in addition to company policy and internal routines. The guidelines are directed to operational staff and to some extent the ship's crew.

4.1 LANDINGS AND SHORE-BASED ACTIVITIES

Landings and shore-based activities can affect or have the potential to affect wild life, plant life, landscape, geologic features and cultural remains.

The part of AECO' guidelines dealing with wildlife is also relevant for landings and shore-based activities.

These guidelines do not apply to camps; if an operator conducts excursions that include tent camps AECO refers them to national and local legislation related to camping activities.

4.1.1. General

Even if different parts of the area in question have different legal protection status through national and local legislation, it is the policy of AECO to regard all land and marine areas as protected and act according to the highest protection status, which includes:

- Do not remove anything. The regulations are relatively complex on what can be removed and where (plants, bones, driftwood, dead animals/skeletons, fossils, stones, bones, etc). The expedition staff must know the regulation. Visitors or staff from AECO-ships should however not move or remove any objects that are not clearly garbage, and thus avoid degradation of the landing sites and their wilderness value.
- Do not allow cairn-building, graffiti creation of any kind or other such disturbances to the physical environment.
- Ensure that visitors, staff or crew do not leave anything behind onshore (or in the water).
- Make every effort to remove garbage found on the shores (and support the “Clean up Svalbard” project).
- Be considerate to other people or activities: Avoid landings near camps, trappers or others unless contact is established and the landing is agreed to.

4.1.2. Site considerations and landing plans

- Avoid other ships at the same landing site. A landing by more than one ship at a time can create confusion, reduce the guides’ overview resulting in security risks, increased disturbance and impact in the local environment, as well as reducing the experience value for the visitor.
- Landing plan: The EL should plan each landing based on knowledge of the site, general and special regulations and restrictions, seasonal, local and weather conditions and safety considerations. The landing-staff must be properly instructed before landing.
- Choose a landing site and hiking route that avoids or minimizes disturbance of animals or cultural remains or erosion of vegetation and landscape.
- Use prepared or marked out paths if they have been established for the purpose (Note: In some areas it is required to use marked paths.)
- Refrain from landing early in (melting) season in sensitive areas or if much rain has made the soil soft / muddy and walking through will create visible trails / damage.
- Organize landings adequately with staff instruction, communications, time-frames etc. Plan the landing in such a way that outside of settlements/developed areas, there are not more than 100 passengers ashore in the same general area at the same time.
- Do not land more than 100 passengers in the same general area outside settlements, unless site specific guidelines states different numbers.
- Large groups ashore should be divided into small groups to enhance the experience and communication and make it easier to ensure that all visitors know how to act. Choose an adequate group size due to the actual site, usually less than 30 unless guidelines states differently
- The guide to visitor ratio must not exceed 1:20 outside settlements unless site specific guidelines states differently, and must be lower if local conditions and regulations require.
- When visiting settlements, adjust group sizes to size of settlements in accordance with local requirements.
- Guides should report to the expedition leader after the landing any possible incidents as well as potential improvements of routines at landing site.

4.1.3. Pre-landing information for visitors

- Inform guests about what they will see, encounter/experience
- Divide visitors into groups according to language, difficulty of walk, etc. This should be done on the ship and before boarding the zodiacs to avoid a crowding at the landing site with unnecessary erosion of the vegetation.

- Visitors should stay in their group: Instruct visitors on the importance of staying in their group, keeping close to the guide and following the instructions.
- Inform visitors about environmental impacts.
- Inform visitors to not remove anything or leave anything behind.

4.1.4. Litter

- Do not leave any litter anywhere, including cigarettes butts.

4.2 GUIDELINES ON WILDLIFE VIEWING

It is the view of AECO that a high level of environmental consideration, taking into account the potential for disturbance by our activities, is the best way to enhance and safeguard the experience of the unique arctic wilderness for our visitors.

Basic principle: No disturbance!

4.2.1. General

Anyone staying in, or operating a tour program in the Arctic, shall show due consideration and exercise the caution required to avoid unnecessary disturbance or damage to the natural environment or cultural heritage.

AECO regards all fauna in the Arctic as protected. No-one may hunt, capture, injure or kill fauna or damage eggs, nests or lairs.

It is prohibited to lure, pursue or otherwise seek out polar bears in such a way as to disturb them or expose either bears or humans to danger.

No disturbance distance: The principle is that we will avoid disturbing the animals. That does not mean that we will move forward until we see a reaction, and then stop. The principle is that we shall avoid provoking a reaction in the first place. It is the responsibility of the operators to avoid interactions/disturbance of animals and define how disturbance will be avoided. It is difficult to establish exact distances to ensure not disturbing wildlife. Different animals, or even the same animals in different situations, will react differently to a given situation. For some animals AECO does give specific recommendations as to distances to the animals as a basic starting point.

Avoid disturbing wildlife with noise. Avoid making loud noises. Keep radios on a low volume setting. If close to animals keep conversation low and calm. Suspend loudspeaker announcements on deck whenever wildlife is nearby.

4.2.2. Data Collection

Identifying and, in many cases, recording species for trip log purposes is a part of most onboard naturalists' reports. These logs are valuable for research and management of the areas.

- Note the GPS position (Latitude and Longitude) of sightings.
- Identify species and provide any additional information, such as identification photographs.
- If encouraged/asked, send copies of sighting reports to collaborating partners and authorities.

4.2.3. Walrus

Walrus are sensitive to boats and human presence, especially females with calves. Noises, smells and sights can elicit a fright response or other reactions.

Haul outs: Walrus visit their haul out sites regularly for resting and during their annual moult in the summer they spend a lot of time on shore.

Change in behaviour: The expedition staff should always watch for behaviour that indicates that the animals have been disturbed when a group approaches. Their reaction can differ considerably depending on the conditions of the sun and wind (direction particularly), if the walrus are on land or ice floes, the sex and age of animals in the group, how long they have been lying out of the water - and most of all - the behaviour of the visitors!

Note that different legislation applies in Svalbard and Greenland.

4.2.3.1. Walrus on land

Greenland

Keep at least 400 meters from any walrus on land. This applies to distance at sea as well as distance on land.

Svalbard

- Landings must be made in a minimum distance of 300 meters from the haul out site. Make sure that the wind direction is from the walrus and towards the visitor group.
- Divide into smaller groups (< 50). Do not walk up to the animals from different directions – the visitors should approach from only one side of a walrus group.
- Inform visitors before landing about the approaching procedure, and tell them to always follow the signals from the leading guide.
- Walk slowly towards the animals, make stops and watch reactions to your presence.
- Avoid making a half circle around the animals. The visiting group should stay together to reduce the impact of their presence.
- Never get between the animals and the sea - walk 'inland' of them. Avoid sudden appearances on the horizons/creating silhouettes – this frightens the animals! Low approaches are always best, staying below the horizon.
- Keep commentary, conversation and engine noise to a minimum.
- Let their behaviour decide how close you go. If they show any sign of disturbance, retreat quietly and slowly. In any case, your group should never cause uneasiness in the herd, or a hurried entry into water.
- 30 meters is a minimum buffer zone: Never go closer than 30 meters irrespective of how undisturbed the walrus might seem.

- Mothers with calves are much more sensitive to disturbance than the bulls. Keep at least 150 meters distance - if necessary more. Stampedes may cause mortality of calves.

4.2.3.2. Walrus on the ice

Walrus spend a lot of time on the ice and the same careful approach methods should apply as when they are encountered ashore. Be especially sensitive to females with calves.

Never approach walrus on ice in such a way as to disturb them

Greenland: Keep a minimum distance of 75 meter from walrus on ice.

4.2.3.3. Swimming walrus

Do not go close to swimming walrus. Walrus are very powerful swimmers, and might attack the zodiac using their tusks, if they feel threatened.

- Draw back if walrus approach.
- Never swim, kayak or dive in walrus waters – it is very dangerous!

Actively prevent being surrounded by walrus in the water. Make sure you are always in the periphery of the group of walrus in the water.

Greenland: Keep a minimum distance of 75 meters from swimming walrus.

4.2.4. Seals

- Do not follow a swimming seal. Let the seals approach you.
- Change in behaviour: Always be aware of the animals' behaviour when approaching a seal lying on an ice floe.
- Pups are often left alone when the mother is feeding. They are not abandoned and should be left alone and not touched.
- Harbour seals use haul outs on rocky shores and skerries similar to the way walrus come up on land. Keep a distance of at least 100meters.
- When approaching seals, act in the same manner as with walrus.

4.2.5. Whales

Following the advice below increases the chances of seeing whales and decreases the possibility of disturbance created by an encounter.

- Keep a good lookout forward (ideally on the sides and the stern as well) where whales may be present.
- Slow down and put engines in neutral: If animals approach the vessel, put engines in neutral and do not re-engage propulsion until they are observed well clear of your vessel. If the animals remain in a local area, and if it is safe to do so, you may shut off the vessel's engine. Some whales are more inclined to approach a silent, stationary vessel

- Avoid excess engine use, gear changes, manoeuvring or backing up to the animals. These movements produce sudden, large changes in underwater noise levels, which may startle, agitate or drive the animals away.
- Do not 'box-in' Whales or cut off their travel or exit routes. This is particularly important when more than one vessel is present.
- Whales should never be approached directly head-on. Ideally, they should be approached from slightly to the side and rear of the animal. Once travelling with the animal, travel parallel with them.
- Avoid sudden or repeated changes in direction, speed or changing gears when close to marine mammals.

4.2.6. Musk oxen

Musk oxen are potentially dangerous. Solitary oxen and herds with calves are considered to be most dangerous, Keep your distance and never approach closer than 100 meters. Never go between mother and calves.

4.2.7. Reindeer

Do not follow reindeer. Let them approach you. Disturbance means less time for foraging and extra consumption of energy.

4.2.8. Arctic Foxes and Wolves

Do not intentionally walk into areas with foxholes between June and mid August. Keep a distance of at least 500 – 1000 meters depending on the terrain unless the den is on the perimeter of a human settlement

If you accidentally find yourself in a foxhole-area with fox puppies, retreat quietly the way you came.

Arctic foxes and wolves are quick to learn begging if fed. Ensure that no food is available to them while you are ashore. Close contact to arctic foxes and wolves is potentially dangerous because of rabies.

4.2.9. Hares

Do not follow hares, let them approach you.

4.2.9.1. Birds

4.2.9.2. General

Regulations relating to nature conservation, bird protection and bird sanctuaries apply in the Arctic. There are 15 bird sanctuaries in Svalbard and 13 in Greenland. It is essential to know all the regulations relating to birds and bird sanctuaries, including entrance prohibition, safety zones, use of ship sirens, etc.

4.2.9.3. Birds ashore

- Keep your distance from nesting birds. Avoid landing in areas with concentrations of breeding birds (most islands/spits/points of land/areas underneath bird cliffs where there are often nesting geese).
- Birds that nest in open plains get frightened at considerable distances. If parent birds are blocked from returning to their nests, increased predation of eggs and chicks by skuas, gulls and arctic foxes can occur. You can also accidentally step on camouflaged chicks or nests.
- Geese and eider duck are especially vulnerable during the breeding season. If they are scared off the nest while brooding Glaucous gulls or arctic foxes may prey on the nest, or the eggs might get cold. Scaring parent geese with chicks may separate the chicks from their parents and increase the risk of predation. In July-August geese are moulting their wing feathers and are unable to fly. They are often found in large, dense groups on land (or on water) and are very vulnerable to disturbance. Keep your distance from such groups!
- Skuas/Arctic terns: If skuas or terns start dive-bombing you – you are too close to the nest. They are protecting their young or their nest. Retreat in the direction you approached from or move away from the area without hesitating. Do not wave your arms (or sticks) to avoid attacks, simply hold your hands still above your head (wear gloves or pull your jacket over your fingers to avoid birds pecking your hands). Watch very carefully where you are walking.
- Waders (purple sandpiper, sandpiper etc.): If these bird species (also skuas) are acting as if they are injured, walking/running with the wings hanging down, their nests are close by. Retreat in the direction you approached from, or follow the bird. It will lead you away from the nest.
- Larger birds of prey (eagles, falcons, etc) use “lookouts”. Avoid any disturbance of birds which are acting as “lookouts”.

4.2.9.4. Birds on water

- Never drive into a flock of birds sitting at sea. The birds are feeding on the surface, diving from it, or simply resting and bathing. Geese and eider ducks chicks are especially vulnerable to the risk of being separated from the parents. The birds are especially sensitive during the moulting period in July-August when they form large, dense groups. This recommendation also applies for birds at glacier fronts.
- Stay on the fringes of bird concentrations. Ships should stay minimum 100 meters and Zodiacs 30 meters away from groups of birds.
- Show special consideration in front of bird cliffs in late July – early August in the jumping period for chicks of guillemot and Brünnichs guillemot. Do not separate chicks from the parents. Disturbance will cause predation on chicks.

4.2.9.5. Bird cliffs and colonies

- Keep your distance from bird cliffs.
- Do not climb into bird-colonies.
- Rapid movement/or rapid change of direction should be avoided (see Zodiac guidelines).
- Ship siren: No person may use ship sirens, fire shots or produce other loud noises within one nautical mile in Svalbard and within 5000 meters) in Greenland from a seabird colony. Keep your distance. Birds breeding low on the cliffs are easily disturbed, especially at the time when the chicks are about to jump. Disturbance may cause “early-jumping”.(see Birds on water)
- Close to some seabird cliffs, there might be geese or eider ducks breeding, which are very sensitive to disruption both when breeding and after hatching.

4.2.10. Entanglement and stranded animals

- Assist where possible: Any animals entangled in fishing equipment, etc., should be assisted when this is possible. Use experienced staff/crew for these situations. Should you not be able to assist, record details including latitude and longitude, species and type of entanglement.
 - Photographs of the entanglement should be taken.
 - Report: Report the event as soon as possible to local authorities for further instructions or so that assistance may be sought. Complete a report and send it to local authorities.
 - Details of dead (floating) whales and stranded animals should be recorded. Where possible, take photographs recording the front and side of the head of the animal (for species identification).
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- Include a scale of measurement (e.g., a ruler or Zodiac paddle) in the photographs. Report to finding to local authorities as soon as possible.

4.2.11. Wildlife found dead

Wildlife found dead or other objects that stem from animals should not be removed e.g. carcasses or other objects coming from polar bears, reindeer, walrus, whales etc. lying in the terrain. In Svalbard, wildlife found dead, parts of wildlife found dead and animals killed in the interest of animal welfare belong to the Svalbard Environmental Fund. Report findings to the Governor and do not remove anything (like walrus tusks, teeth and claws of polar bear etc.).

If you observe entangled or dead animals, report to the authorities in accordance with regulations and local requirements.

4.2.12. Rabies

Rabies has been detected in Arctic regions. Some animals, such as the arctic fox, arctic dogs and arctic wolves are potential carriers of rabies.

- Never touch live or dead wild animals.
- Inform local authorities if you observe animals that might have rabies.

4.2.13. Arctic dogs

Arctic dogs are potentially dangerous. Keep safe distance. Report to local authority or community if you observe loose dogs outside settlements.

4.3 VEGETATION

All flora on Svalbard is protected by the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act (§ 28), independent of location.

Even if there is no general protection of flora in Jan Mayen and Greenland, do not allow visitors to pick flowers and plants in any location or cause unnecessary damage to plants.

Assess the particular site, its characteristics and vulnerabilities and instruct (and) visitors accordingly.

- Do not pick flowers or remove plants
 - Wet areas: Avoid walking in wet vegetated areas. Special care should be taken early in the season, and after rain.
 - Unfertile sand: Try to walk on barren sand, gravel or stones.
 - Vegetation: Avoid stepping on flowers or plant beds if at all possible.
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- Use already established paths, instead of spreading out. If at high-use locations it can be better to develop one or a few paths rather than many all over the area. Be aware that it is mandatory to use established paths in some areas.

4.4 GEOLOGY

- Avoid making visible trails. Preferably walk on rock, firm soil or gravel.
- Gravel slants: Avoid walking up or down gravel slants where paths become very visible.
- Specific geological formations: Approach interesting geologic formations in such a way that they are not harmed.
- Thermal wells: Be aware that some thermal wells may be protected and specific regulations may apply. Do not walk on the limestone plateau, or the unique vegetation nearby. These calcareous formations are very sensitive to physical disturbance such as trampling. Keep a minimum distance of five meters.
- Fossils: Do not remove fossils. (There are different regulations in different areas; AECO-members passengers or staff should not remove fossils, or for that matter stones, at any landing sites.
- Geological structures under water: Some geological structures under water may be especially vulnerable (like the under water pillars in Ikkafjorden – special regulations apply). Avoid causing any harm to such structures,

4.5 CAIRNS, GRAFFITI, SIGNS, ETC.

- Do not build cairns or gather or rearrange stones in any way
- Do not allow cairn-building, graffiti creation of any kind or other such disturbances to the physical environment.

4.6 CULTURAL REMAINS

The legislation related to cultural remains may to some extent vary from Svalbard to Jan Mayen and Greenland and in some areas also from inside to outside protected areas. To avoid any confusion AECO uses the legislation in Svalbard (most strict) as general guidelines for cultural remains throughout Arctic.

All structures, sites and movable historical objects dating from 1945 or earlier are protected. Never damage or change the state of cultural remains in any manner. Do not put up tents or make fires closer than 100 meters from such remains. Human graves and set-guns for polar bears, as well as skeletal remains at slaughtering sites are protected cultural remains independent of their age.

- Do not touch anything inside the 100 m security zone around cultural remains: Inside a security zone of 100m in all directions from a cultural remain, nothing should be moved or touched (either stones, bones or pieces of wood etc.).
- Walk around: Never walk in between or on objects that are considered cultural remains. Make a circle around, preferably 5 meters away. This will make it easier to avoid anyone walking on or touching any objects considered as cultural remains.

- Evidence of human graves of any kind, including crosses and other grave markings as well as bones and bones fragments found on or below the surface of the ground are protected irrespective of their age.

- Skeletal animal remains at slaughtering sites for walruses and whales, and associated with spring-guns for polar bears, are protected as cultural remains irrespective of their age.
- Drift wood should not be removed.
- Blubber ovens and graves: Be aware of blubber ovens and graves in the terrain. They might be difficult to see. Never use them as platforms. Keep your distance and walk around them.
- Graveyards: Walk around, not between the graves.
- House grounds: Do not enter old house grounds or trapping stations.

If you find structures or objects that may not be known to or registered by local authorities, it is highly appreciated if a report of the finding (if possible including pictures) is submitted to relevant authorities.

4.7 DRONES AND OTHER UAVS

AECO has banned a general use of UAVs by revenue passengers in the "AECO-areas". Use of UAVs for special purposes may be decided by the operator, within limits of regulations.

5. POLAR BEARS AND FIREARM SAFETY

5.1 POLAR BEARS

Svalbard environmental protection Act states that it is prohibited to seek out polar bear in such a way as to disturb them or expose either bears or humans to danger. The legislation sets absolute limits to behavior around polar bears. Within these limits the following guidelines applies:

AECO members must take every necessary action to prevent their passengers from having close, unexpected encounters with polar bears. Any shooting at (or of) a polar bear will be investigated as a possible criminal offence. The investigation will include focus on whether the tour operator has ensured that the guards had the necessary knowledge of firearms, that training in polar bear protection had been

given, that adequate firearms and deterrents were available and that there are established routines for handling confrontations with polar bears.

Polar bears can be encountered all over Svalbard, included Bjørnøya and theoretically all over Greenland, but most likely in East -, North – and Northwest Greenland.

In areas with polar bears, the bears can be encountered anywhere, anytime.

- Avoid confrontations with bears. Hurting or killing a polar bear is an offence if not done in self defence. Irresponsible actions leading to such a situation can also be deemed an offence.
- Do not make a landing if you can not see clearly, e.g. fog with low visibility.
- Always be vigilant to bears; always keep watch when in zodiacs or ashore. When landing, check out the terrain before landing the passengers. If a bear is close to the landing site, then the landing should be cancelled at that site. Establish a polar bear watch system and stay in places where you have good visibility of the surrounding area.
- Never feed or leave anything edible where it can be found by bears. (Nothing should be left behind). Teaching bears that people can mean food is a potentially deadly hazard both for bears and people.
- Never follow /chase bears; by ship or zodiac, in drift ice or open waters or on-foot ashore. The bear can become stressed (without you noticing) and an emergency situation may be the result.
- Never put pressure on anyone or be pressured by anyone to approach close to bears, or do anything related to bears that are not deemed safe.
- If you find yourself in close proximity to a bear ashore you should observe the following:
- Never approach a bear when you catch sight of it. Leave the area swiftly and calmly. Stay together as a group and keep an eye on the bear. Bring sub-groups together.
- Frighten off the bear if it follows you and you have no chance of getting away. Stay together and make as much noise as possible. Behave firmly and make use of whatever means you have to intimidate it. Make sure you do not shoot flares off such that they land behind a bear that is on its

way towards you. Use signal guns or signal pens with crack cartridges (not maritime signal flares or red flares of any kind).

- Shoot to kill: If a bear refuses to be intimidated, so that human lives are at stake, prepare to kill it.
- Define a dividing line in your surroundings, and prepare to shoot if the bear crosses it. You should target vital organs, such as the heart or lungs, if possible. Continue shooting till you are sure that the animal has been put down. Be very careful when you approach the animal afterward.
- Report injured or killed polar bears immediately to local authorities. Don't remove the dead animal or other items on the location of the incident.
- Plan ahead with the landing staff, for the handling of a possible polar bear situation.
- Guide to visitor ratio should be adequate taking into account the risk of polar bear encounters.

5.2 POLAR BEARS- VESSELS AND ZODIACS

("Zodiac" here refers to all small boats used for "zodiac-cruising" and tendering of passengers)

If you catch sight of a polar bear on land or on ice from an expedition cruise vessel **a minimum of 200 meters should be kept between the vessel and the bear(s)**. Do not attempt to approach the bear to a closer distance with the vessel.

If the vessel is laying still and a polar bear is approaching it is not necessary to retreat unless there is potential danger in the situation. Take all necessary safety precautions especially when polar bears are approaching the vessel on ice and can potentially reach the broadside.

Small vessel and vessels with low outside decks must never allow a bear to approach the broadside.

Portholes that can be reached by the polar bear must always be closed in these situations.

Do not allow anyone to lean over the broadside or to put themselves at any risk during the "polar bear situation".

In the event of a polar bear sighting, on land or on ice, from a zodiac, the zodiac-driver shall make sure that he/she always keeps at least a distance of **30 meters** between the zodiac and the land/ice/spot where the polar bear is present.

This distance is only acceptable when it is absolutely clear that the bear shows no signs of stress or being disturbed from the presence. If the polar bear shows any signs of stress or starts walking away, never follow it but retreat from the area immediately.

The zodiac must always be positioned so that it can leave the area in a safe and controlled manner should the situation require it.

Never follow or approach a swimming polar bear, from any angle. If you catch sight of a swimming polar bear, retreat immediately.

5.3 FIREARMS

Careless handling of firearms represents a greater hazard to human health than polar bears. It is imperative that safety rules be adhered to when firearms are stored, transported or used.

People have very differing attitudes/feelings towards firearms ranging from nervous and negative feelings to strong interest and a desire to look at/touch weapons. It is important that the expedition leader/guide explain the need of guns and signal guns, how and when we load and unload them, the dangers involved, the importance of unauthorized persons never touching them and of following the instructions of the guides and guards ashore.

5.3.1. General

Type of weapon: The Governor of Svalbard recommends the use of rifle calibre .308 Win or larger for polar bear protection. The ammunition must be of the expanding type. All firearms in use on the cruise should be of the same calibre, using the same ammunition.

Guides should use their “own” rifles: Guides and/or polar bear guards carrying firearms should preferably be responsible for one particular rifle throughout the season (or throughout the whole cruise).

5.3.2. Training

All guides and polar bear guards should have good shooting skills, be experienced in handling the firearm and have knowledge about polar bear behaviour. At least one guide ashore should have considerable experience, preferably from hunting or active shooting. Unless the user is familiar with the firearm and has had sufficient training with a firearm, the sense of safety provided by firearms is deceptive. Test your weapon and signal gun/pen prior to the cruise. Never point at anyone with a gun or signal pen; loaded or unloaded.

5.3.3. Signal guns

To frighten away a polar bear, a signal gun or emergency signal pen (with crack cartridges) is more suitable than a rifle, but flares can not replace a rifle; they only complement it. Moreover, flares are useful for alerting about imminent danger or accident. Flare guns also represent a hazard for humans and should not be loaded unless you need them.

5.3.4. Storage and maintenance

- Weapon locker: All firearms should be stored in the ships’ weapon locker, never in the owner’s cabin. The bolt should not be stored at the same place as the rifle.
- Ammunition: Should be locked in.

- Running maintenance: The “owner” has the responsibility of maintaining and cleaning their rifle. Be sure that the oil used to clean the gun is suitable to low temperatures – incorrect cleaning materials can result in weapons jamming in the Arctic.

5.3.5. In zodiacs - transportation

- Use a cover to protect the rifle from sea water and dust.
- The rifle should never be loaded or half loaded in the zodiacs.

5.3.6. Ashore

- The expedition staff must keep an overview of their group!
- If approaching a cabin, send an armed person out to check out the cabin first to make sure there are no bears hiding close to or inside the cabin.
- Never let visitors walk alone if not accompanied by a rifle-carrying person.
- Load cartridge (half loading) of at least one firearm immediately when coming ashore outside settlements.
- Load the chamber only to prepare for an actual warning or shot. Never walk around with loaded chamber.
- Empty the chamber immediately when a risky situation ends.
- Never let visitors handle your rifle.

5.3.7. In settlements

- Never walk inside the settlements with a half loaded or loaded rifle. Let the bolt be open or remove it, making it visible to everybody that it is unloaded.
- Never walk outside the settlements in polar bear areas without a rifle.

5.4 HAZARDS AND SAFETY RISK ASHORE

Beside risks in connection with the polar bears, walrus, firearms and the zodiac landings - the following challenges are among those that can be met:

- Along shore: Sudden waves, shoreline fallout.
- Rivers: Rivers can be deeper than they appear.
- Hidden ice: Gravel and scree can cover hidden ice or glacier remnants and possibly crevasses/ bergschrund. Ice can be unstable and can slide out/fall.
- Glaciers: Glaciers should not be approached without experienced guides.
- Flood waves: Glacier fronts and icebergs flipping over can cause serious flooding on shorelines.
- Weather conditions can change rapidly; fog, blizzard etc.
- Visitors hiking capacity: An overestimation of someone who takes part in a longer or more difficult walk can spread out the group and lead to dangerous situations.

6. ZODIAC OPERATIONS

6.1 GENERAL SAFETY

6.1.1. Onboard equipment and condition

- Anchor
 - Paddles
 - Spare fuel
 - Rope for anchoring
 - Pump
-
- Tool kit
 - Fire extinguisher
 - Radio
 - Compass/ GPS
 - First aid kit
-
- Flare kit and sound signalling device
 - Boat must be properly inflated
 - Any defects found in outboard motors, boats or associated equipment should be reported to a designated person as soon as possible.
 - Boats should be clean, water pumped out and seats wiped off prior to boarding visitors.
-
- Capacity: Maximum seating capacity varies with the type of zodiac - refer to the zodiac manual in each ship and then do not overload boats.
 - At least two zodiacs should always drive together, in case of a MOB situation. This is also the recommended guideline when there are no visitors in the zodiac. The exception is during very short shuttles.
 - Life vest: Be sure that everyone onboard is wearing a life vest/personal floatation device (PDF) properly before entering the zodiac.
 - Guides carrying rifles go ashore first. At new places and in terrain where it is difficult to see the surrounding area, a guide should do a reconnaissance and look out for polar bears before any passenger comes ashore.
 - The dead man's string should be used according to the policy of your company.
 - Technical operational procedures: The zodiac driver should always check that the zodiac is adequately maintained before operating; full and appropriate fuel container, sufficiently inflated etc.

6.1.2. Range finders

- It is strongly recommended to use Laser Range Finders (LSRs) during zodiac operations. Regularly check distances to potentially hazardous features.
- It is recommended that the LSR has a reach of minimum 1000 meters.
- It is recommended to use the LSR for distance assessment training for staff.

6.1.3. Driver qualities

- Experience and training: All drivers should have gone through satisfactory driving practice before operating any vehicles.
- Technical skills: All guides should be acquainted with basic technical skills concerning zodiacs. This is due to the necessity of handling unforeseen situations.

6.1.4. Driving procedures

- Go slowly (not faster than 5 knots) when near birds or animals, or when the sea-floor conditions are unknown.
- Avoid sudden or repeated changes in direction, speed or changing gears when close to marine mammals or swimming birds.
- Non-driving rules for crew/staff without passengers: Zodiacs should only be driven by crew /staff without passengers if necessary and according to the same rules that are defined in these guidelines.
- Shallows / stones: Before operating, search for information about the sailing conditions in the actual area. Do a reconnaissance without passengers if necessary.

6.1.5. Ice conditions

- Allow for the actual ice condition.
- Fjord Ice: Newly formed fjord ice has sharp edges that might rip a hole in your zodiac.
- Drift Ice: Investigate the ice drift before the zodiac operation. Drift ice will move due to sea currents. You might suddenly be enclosed when sailing in drift ice.

6.1.6. Glacier fronts

Glaciers fronts may calve, causing flood waves and/or flying bits of ice. Keep your distance! The recommended minimum distance to glaciers in the Arctic is no less than 200 meters. For high activity glaciers such as glaciers fed directly from the Greenland Inland Ice Cap a distance of 400 meters is recommended.

At some glacier fronts, even this may be too close, especially in narrow fjords, shallow fjords and fjords with high cliffs. Show extra caution and always increase the distance to the glacier fronts if the glacier calves in shallow water or on land – use good judgment.

- All glaciers may calve, even if the probability of a glacier calving may differ. E.g. the probability of the Bråsvell glacier calving is much smaller than the Monaco glacier, but still the Bråsvellglacier may calve.
- All zodiacs must keep an appropriate distance (including a buffer zone) away in order to handle a possible calving.
- Avoid being trapped by islands or in brash ice close to the glacier front if a calving should occur.
- Factors that might affect the probability of a calving:
 - Glacier front height.
 - Water depth in front of the glacier.
 - Gradient of the glacier.
 - The speed of the glacier front.
 - Degree of fracturing in the glacier front.
 - Sea and current dynamics under the glacier front.
 - Fjord width, sea depth and topography as high cliffs

6.1.7. Icebergs

- Potentially unstable: All icebergs can suddenly flip over, causing flood waves. Keep your distance! Icebergs are continuously under the influence of waves, tides, currents and temperature, and therefore potentially unstable. Remember that 90% of the berg is under water.
- Sudden flipping might cause huge waves, or parts of the iceberg might come to the surface at unexpected places.
- Never approach an iceberg too closely.
- Details: See Glacier fronts.

6.1.8. Cliffs

Stones falling from cliffs, ravines with sand/stones and the breaking up of ice are hazardous. For these reasons, do not drive Zodiacs close to cliffs

6.1.9. Impacts on the environment

Fauna in water, in drift ice, on ice floes and ashore: See the guidelines for wildlife viewing and polar bear safety.

Pollution: Zodiacs and zodiac driving represent a potential pollution risk through fuel leakage, use of low quality fuel or untrimmed or old model engines. Noise pollution is also an issue. Members of AECO should always strive to reduce such pollution potentials as much as possible in their operations.

6.1.10. Passengers handling procedures and instructions

Passengers boarding, and disembarking procedures from/to ship and to/from the shoreline:

- Mandatory Zodiac briefing prior to the first excursion.

- Describe the boarding procedure.
- Demonstrate the proper procedure for donning the lifejacket to be worn in the Zodiacs.
- Boarding procedure:
- Sailors grip: One passenger enters and leaves the zodiac at a time. Use sailors grip and step on the inflatable side of the zodiac.
- The visitor takes a seat at the designated place.
- Life vest: Be sure that all passengers have their life vests on properly.

6.1.11. Passengers clothing/equipment

- Inform passengers about appropriate clothing for the conditions they will be encountering at the first information meeting in a general sense and before every landing specifically.
 - Recommended clothing: Windproof suit, hat, gloves, scarf and suitable footwear.
 - Recommended equipment: Backpack with some spare clothing is recommended as well as camera-protection against water splash.

6.1.12. Passenger behaviour on board

- Remain seated: Passengers shall always remain seated unless embarking or disembarking from the boat, or unless the boat is stopped and permission is obtained from the operator. There should never be more than 1 passenger standing at the time while entering or embarking.
- Secure equipment and belongings to avoid losing items overboard.

6.1.13. Adaptation to weather and sea conditions

Balance the boat according to the weight of the passengers.

7. CULTURAL AND SOCIAL INTERACTION

“Do not expect to find everything as it is at home – you have left home to find things different.”

These Guidelines for cultural and social interaction are developed to support members in their effort to conduct respectable interaction with people and cultures they meet, and to maximize local communities' benefits from tourism. Although these guidelines especially mention Inuit and Greenlandic communities, they apply to visits in any Arctic town or settlement, including Norwegian, Russian and Polish settlements in Svalbard.

7.1 THE ARCTIC POPULATION

With some exceptions, the Arctic is characterized by huge wilderness areas and small remote towns and settlements, often with Inuit population. Inuit is a general term for the group of culturally similar indigenous people inhabiting the Arctic coasts of Siberia, Alaska, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Quebec, Labrador in Canada, and Greenland. Inuit have traditionally relied on living resources as means of livelihood and many still do. Although today Inuit work in all sectors of the economy, many may supplement their income with hunting and fishing.

Few small towns and settlements in the Arctic have road accessibility and contact with the outside world may be limited for greater parts of the year. Larger parts of the Arctic regions are therefore different from more populated and industrialized areas of the world.

7.2 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN ARCTIC REGIONS

For a small and sometimes isolated town or settlement in the Arctic, the call of a cruise-ship is often a welcome and happy event. Locals may find both ships and their passengers interesting. But tourism in Arctic regions is growing rapidly. Anyone involved needs to be cognizant to the economic, social and cultural impact the growing tourism may have on local communities. Responsibility for respectable interaction and local benefits also rests with the tour-operators and guests visiting.

Sustainable tourism includes:

“Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.

Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed including stable employment and income-earning opportunities. (...).”

- World Tourism Organization

7.2.1. Before the visit

It is important to realize that in many settlements it is a substantial part of the population who are involved when a cruise ship arrives. Local capacity may be stretched to its limits in order to serve a cruise ship and its passengers, therefore;

- Always inform the local community contact person/office about your planned call well in advance.
- If possible, plan your schedule in cooperation with your local contacts in the communities you plan to visit.
- Be flexible, you might be asked to change or understand that you should consider changing arrival time, due to local capacity or other reasons.
- Give subsequent and continuous information on deviations from the schedule. Changes may imply huge logistical challenges to the local organizers.

7.2.2. Provide benefits

When visiting a town or settlement, you are using their hospitality and infrastructure to give your guests an experience. Make sure that the community benefits from your visit by:

- Always use and pay for dock facilities, when accessible. Never anchor and use tender boats if other acceptable options exist.
- If possible, use local ship agents.
- Make local purchases/use local providers of sightseeing tours, shows and other activities.
- If possible, use local guides or guides with local affiliation. Consider the impression it gives the locals when “strangers” guide groups around their town or settlement, especially if it leaves locals unemployed.
- If asked, assist local communities in developing tourism products/activities, but do not encourage anyone to dilute their culture in order to commercialize cultural activities.

7.2.3. Cultural understanding

Tourism is a great way of learning about, promoting and creating tolerance between people of different backgrounds and cultures. When visiting foreign countries and cultures, guests may find things very different from home. It is important not to judge other cultures based on one’s own sense of reality, norms and values, but try to understand that cultures are qualitatively different. Tour-operators can positively influence cultural understanding:

- Respect local cultures.
- Work against prejudiced attitudes.
- Educate staff about local history, contemporary culture, norms and values.
- Staffs are role models. Train and monitor all staff members, as their attitude and information may influence your guests` attitude and understanding.
- Use local guides and/or lecturers if possible.
- Inform/educate guests about local history, contemporary culture, norms and values.

7.2.4. When visiting

- Research information about special considerations which you may need to be aware of, local customs, events, restricted areas, etc.
- Never barter or import banned substances to a community.
- Respect privacy; keep a good distance from private houses and never glance or photograph through private windows.
- Talk to and not about people you meet.
- Do not visit graveyards or other areas of religious or cultural significance without permission.
- Ask before you photograph – a hesitation means NO.
- Cairns may be signposts – do not alter them.
- If possible, invite locals onboard.
- Inform guests about restrictions, local customs and expected behaviour.
- Encourage guests to buy local souvenirs and products, but guests should be aware of the legalities of importing/transporting purchases into other countries e.g. CITES (Convention of 3

- March 1973 on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora/The Washington Convention)

8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS IN THE ARCTIC

8.1 ARCTIC DOGS

In many Arctic towns and settlements there will be a significant number of Arctic dogs. They are working dogs and not pet animals. They can be dangerous to strangers, therefore:

- Never approach or attempt to pet Arctic dogs without permission and supervision from the dog owner/handler.
- Never feed Arctic dogs without permission and supervision from the dog owner/handler.

8.2 MILITARY STATIONS

In Greenland all military stations are closed to the public. Do not visit or contact and ask to visit military stations.

8.3 SEARCH AND RESCUE SERVICES IN ARCTIC REGIONS

Search and rescue services are present in most Arctic areas. But remember, the areas are huge and the resources limited. Avoid any potential misuse of resources by:

- Keeping in contact with local authorities.
- Reporting your position in accordance with local demands.
- Always informing local authorities before entering and after leaving areas with limited possibilities of communication (e.g. fjords).
- The use of satellite positioning system is desired.

8.4 SCIENTIFIC WORK AND CO-OPERATION

AECO and its members should:

- Support, and if needed, proactively initiate studies on cumulative visitor- impacts to sites and/or areas.
- Support and contribute to relevant scientific and research activities through contributing to transportation, logistical support or other assistance from our ships in Arctic waters.
- Engage in a working relationship with non-governmental organizations active in conservation and environmental issues.

8.5 THE “CLEAN UP SVALBARD” PROJECT

- Inform visitors about and participate in the “Clean up Svalbard project”, if the site is suitable.
- Inform visitors about the difference between garbage and cultural remains. Do not attempt to clean up cultural heritage sites.
- When in doubt remove only plastic containers, fishing nets, etc.

9. POST VISIT REPORTING

Use AECO’s cruise database for Post Visit Reporting.

Svalbard: Report to the Governor. Ships sailing in Svalbard waters shall, according to law, report all landings with the exact site name and position (preferably GPS-position) of landing and the number of persons landing.

Greenland: Ships sailing in Greenland national park shall submit post-visit reports in accordance with requirements following the permission to enter.

10. EVALUATION

Evaluation should aim to:

- Evaluate planning and operations systematically in view of environmental and safety challenges and experiences with the aim of improving your operations and, if applicable, the AECO-guidelines/industry standards.

Additional information

The AECO Operational Guidelines were adopted by the Annual Meeting of AECO in 2004, while the AECO Environmental & Safety Guidelines were approved by the members in May 2005. These guidelines were slightly audited by the Annual meeting in October 2006. The guidelines for cultural and social interaction were adopted as provisional guidelines in April 2007 and approved by the Annual meeting in October 2007. The guidelines for implementation were approved by the Annual meeting in 2007. The guidelines were made applicable for Jan Mayen and Greenland (in addition to Svalbard) in October 2006. The amended guidelines approved by the Annual meeting 2007 and 2013, reflects AECO's geographical range. Minor amendments have been done almost annually, the last amendment in October 2014.

Annex

I. Acts and regulations relevant for Arctic expedition cruising

I.I. International

Maritime operations of ships and cruise activities are regulated through national and international legislation, in particular the comprehensive convention-system adopted by the UN-organisation IMO (International Maritime Organisation) concerning safety at sea (SOLAS and others), pollution (MARPOL etc), management systems (ISM-code etc) and liability. The documents are available at www.imo.org

I.II. Svalbard

The Svalbard treaty

<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/jd/Documents-and-publications/Reports-to-the-Storting-White-Papers/Reports-to-the-Storting/19992000/Report-No-9-to-the-Storting-/16.html?id=456935>

The Svalbard Act (not available in English)

Regulations relating to tourism and other travel in Svalbard

<http://www.sysselmannen.svalbard.no/eng>

Svalbard Environmental Protection Act

<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/doc/Laws/Acts/Svalbard-Environmental-Protection-Act.html?id=173945>

Regulation relating to camping activities

http://www.sysselmannen.no/Documents/Sysselmannen_dok/English/Regulations/Regulations_Camping_0n-R7.pdf

Regulations relating to off-road motor traffic and the use of aircraft for tourism purposes in Svalbard

http://www.sysselmannen.no/Documents/Sysselmannen_dok/English/Regulations/Regulations_Motor_traffic1_EfG_F7.pdf

Regulation relating to harvesting on the fauna in Svalbard

http://www.sysselmannen.no/Documents/Sysselmannen_dok/English/Regulations/Regulations_FOR-2002-06-24-712_Hosting_Svalbard_2009_eng_2_8hmdY.pdf

Regulations relating to environmentally hazardous substances, waste and waste management fees in Svalbard

http://www.sysselmannen.no/Documents/Sysselmannen_dok/English/Regulations/Regulations_Pollution_aoRGq.pdf

Regulations relating to environmental impact assessment and delimitation of the land-use planning areas in Svalbard

<http://www.sysselmannen.no/en/Toppmeny/About-Svalbard/Laws-and-regulations/>

Not all regulations relating to the various protected areas in Svalbard are available in English:

- North-West Spitsbergen national park
- South-Spitsbergen national park
- Prins Karls Forland national park
- Eastern-Svalbard nature reserves
- Kong Karls Land nature reserve
- Moffen nature reserve

Hopen nature reserve
Bjørnøya nature reserve
Ossean Sars nature reserve
Nordenskiöld Land national park
North Isfjorden national park
Sassen-Bünsow Land national park
Inner Wijdefjorden national park
Festingen geotop protected area

I.III. Jan Mayen

Regulations for Jan Mayen are not available in English

Forskrift av 28 mai 1971 om regulering av naturinngrep på Jan Mayen

Regulation of 28. May 1971 relating to nature interference in Jan Mayen

Forskrift av 11 august 1978 om forvaltning av vilt og ferskvannsfiske

Regulation of 11. August 1978 relating to management of wild fauna and fresh water fishing

Forskrift av 21. juni 1974 om fredning av kulturminner

Regulation of 21 June 1974 on cultural heritage protection

Executive Order on Access to and Conditions for Traveling in Certain Parts of Greenland (available in Danish only)

Landsting Act No. 29 of 18 December 2003 on the Protection of Nature (available in Danish only)

Landstingslov nr. 29 af 18. december 2003 om naturbeskyttelse

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={B285FE79-D0A5-4C4A-92B4-B93D0C018161}>

Landsting Act No. 11 of 12 November 1980 on nature preservation

Landstingslov nr. 11 af 12. november 1980 om naturfredning i Grønland.

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={189B6C1F-8689-4632-879F-B92DE81765ED}>

Landsting Act No. 12 of 29 October 1999 on harvest and hunting

Landstingslov nr. 12 af 29. oktober 1999 om fangst og jagt.

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={1A6BE69B-3B89-4173-BAC1-1C61736FF93C}>

Landsting Act No. 25 of 18 December 2003 on Protection of fauna

Landstingslov nr. 25 af 18. december 2003 om dyreværn

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={B3C3D16B-B19B-435B-9D59-79D56D25826C}>

Landsting Decree No. 6 of 30 October 1998 on museums

Landstingsforordning nr. 6 af 30. oktober 1998 om museumsvæsen.

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={62061B84-3080-4E73-B862-A29E2A62C0D2}>

Home Rule Order No. 10 of 13 April 2005 on harvest of large whales

Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 10 af 13. april 2005 om fangst af store hvaler.

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={C6C459A4-3064-49AA-95B7-0A5C6E17D97E}>

Home Rule Order No. 21 of 22 September 2005 on protection and harvest of polar bears

Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 21 af 22. september 2005 om beskyttelse og fangst af isbjørne

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={699D9C77-D0A7-42D9-B90F-F9F04FA99E3D}>

Home Rule Order No. 22 of 19 August 2002 on hunting and fishing with fees

Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 22 af 19. august 2002 om betalingsjagt og -fiskeri

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={68093C3F-EDCF-4F2A-A5CA-0792C4BCAC68}>

Home Rule Order No. 20 of 25 August 2005 on mountain trout fishing

Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 20 af 25. august 2005 om fiskeri efter fjeldørred

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={93E70CD7-22DC-4711-9ECA-C53F9BF77B36}>

Home Rule Order No. 12 of 13 September 2004 on export and import of wild animals and plants, etc. covered by the Convention of 3 March 1973 on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Washington Convention/CITES) (available in English)

Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 12 af 13. september 2004 om eksport og import af vilde dyr og planter mv. omfattet af konventionen af 3. marts 1973 om international handel med udryddelsestruede vilde dyr og planter (Washingtonkonventionen/

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={C6151283-EA47-49A1-B0A1-270551FC0B91}>

Home Rule Order No. 7 of 17 June 1992 on the National park in North – and East-Greenland (available in Danish only)

Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 7 af 17. juni 1992 om Nationalparken i Nord- og Østgrønland.

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={1FC9C99F-1BE0-494A-A663-4CA19ABEAF62}>

Greenland Home Rule Government Order No. 1 of 21 January 2004 on the Conservation of Birds (available in Danish only)

Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 1 af 21. januar 2004 om beskyttelse af fugle

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={530DB75C-4E36-4B94-B67A-1BE3916DFD3F}>

Home Rule Order No. 8 of 8 February on the conservation of reindeers

Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 8 af 8. februar 2001 om beskyttelse af rensdyr.

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={8ACA9813-8E64-4BE9-8958-AC2097072669}>

Home Rule Order No. 9 of 8 February 2001 on the conservation of musk ox

Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 9 af 8. februar 2001 om beskyttelse af moskusokser.

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={62119CBE-7CD4-4D7C-A81A-E9559E855E61}>

Home Rule Order No. 20 of 17 May 1989 on the conservation of foxes in Greenland

Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 20 af 17. maj 1989 om fredning af ræve i Grønland.

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={24A1AAA3-5DB3-4D44-BF4C-C260735AF766}>

Home Rule Order No. 9 of 5 May 1988 on the conservation of wolves in Greenland

Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 9 af 5. maj 1988 om fredning af ulve i Grønland.

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={03E8764E-F014-4E3C-89C1-97D114B79482}>

Home Rule Order No. 13 of 13 September 2004 on the conservation of wolverine

Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 13 af 13. september 2004 om beskyttelse af jærv

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={C2EDD881-EA92-484F-A351-CF8E4F6ACCDB}>

Home Rule Order No. 2 of 12 February 2004 on the conservation and harvest of belugas and narwhales

Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 2 af 12. februar 2004 om beskyttelse og fangst af hvid- og narhvaler.

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={7A6F08AC-7741-480E-874E-394E58A4D4BB}>

Home Rule Order No. 21 of 17th May 1989 on the Nature Reserve in the Melville Bay (available in Danish only)

Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 21 af 17. maj 1989 om naturreservatet i Melville Bugt.

<http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={40C78374-0645-48B8-A846-1A50E9333611}>