

Seasonal Update 2025

25 April 2025



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AECO Online Assessments

It is compulsory for staff working for AECO members to pass the relevant assessments prior to every season. **It is the responsibility of the individual operator to ensure that field staff and mariners have passed the relevant tests.**

Field Staff Online Assessment

The 2025 Field Staff Online Assessment is available throughout 2025. All field staff previously registered to the Field Staff Assessments still have access with their old logon credentials. However, Operators must forward a self-registration link to confirmed staff. The information on this was forwarded to all members in January 2025.

The mandatory testing scheme requires candidates to pass the test from the relevant geographical areas of work **and** the *AECO General Questions* test.

Mariners Online Assessment

All personnel previously registered to take the Mariners Assessment can log on with their old log on credentials.

New candidates for the AECO Mariners Assessment can use the same self-registration link as field staff.

The AECO Mariners Assessment (one test) is mandatory for the following personnel onboard: Captain, Staff Captain (where applicable, Officers in charge of navigational watch, Environmental Officer (where applicable), Chief Engineer, Lead Hotel Officer/Manager, Helicopter pilot (where applicable), Submersible pilot (where applicable).

Assessment Resources

References to the Field Staff and Marines Assessments can be found [here](#). Site Specific Guidelines are no longer a legal requirement in Svalbard and hence these can now be found in the public part of the AECO website: [Guidelines | AECO](#).

Off-Vessel Risk Assessment Tool (O-VRAT)

AECO's Off Vessel Risk Assessment Tool (O-VRAT) mobile app is available to field staff and other staff working for AECO member companies.

Operators are asked to register their staff using the Excel template distributed by the Secretariat on 02 January 2025 ([O_VRAT_Registration_template.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)).

The O-VRAT app has been populated with relevant information for many sites throughout the AECO geographical area, making it a useful planning and landing preparation tool as well as a risk assessment tool. This includes links to guidelines where applicable, local legislation where applicable, etc. In case relevant information is missing in specific sites, please inform aeco@aeco.no and assist in making it an even more valuable tool for field staff.

AECO Cruise Database and Live Scheduler

2025 started with the launch of the new AECO Cruise Database and Live Scheduler. Everything to do with itineraries, site bookings, Post Visit Reports, vessel overview, and some operator administration is now live in the new system. The old Cruise Database and the associated Excel-file containing the itineraries of all members are now of the past and no longer operational!

The new AECO Cruise Database and Live Scheduler gives further responsibility to the members. Operational inquiries about the AECO Cruise Database and Live Scheduler, such as access, are best addressed with the operations department of each member before asking AECO. Access can only be granted by the member - not AECO.

Ensure that ELs have adequate internet granted to use the new system on a regular, many times a day, basis.

The live system is supplemented by an “offline” or low bandwidth system that takes place via e-mail. This is primarily a backup system but is writing directly to the live system on equal terms as changes made to the regular online system. A separate manual exists on how to work the offline scheduler system.

The AECO Cruise Database and Live Scheduler manuals can be found [here](#).

During March 2025 a few new fields were added to the Company information tab. For Admin registration levels: Please review your company information and complete it to the maximum extent possible. Even if fields are optional.

For Admin, Operator, and Bridge Officer/DPA access levels: Regarding the **Ships information** tab. **Please complete the information to the maximum extent possible.** Even if fields are optional.

Continued from 2024! The Governor of Svalbard has made an **online Post Visit Report process** on their application portal: **ID Porten**. Find information [here](#). According to the Governor, a PVR for any given trip must be **uploaded to the portal within four weeks** after the trip is completed.

It is no longer possible to export and forward a PVR from the AECO Cruise Database!

Post visit reports are now one with the sailing plans. Keep your sailing plans up to date in the live system and your PVRs will automatically be updated. Only numbers and activities have to be entered for each site in this case.

NEW! The deadline for submitting PVRs is 14 days after end of trip!

Once a PVR is completed, it is submitted to AECO for approval. The data collected in connection with PVR is of vital importance to AECO and approval is required before the obligation to submit a PVR is completed.

Please note! Operations department access levels for each member are able to track the progress of PVRs and other live reporting requirements.

AECO vessel contact list

The AECO vessel contact list is now fully integrated into the AECO Cruise Database and Live Scheduler. Use the Fleet Map and click the vessel you need to get in touch with for contact information.

The requirement for full fleet communication via e-mail is no longer required. All changes made to your sailing plan is automatically and immediately visible to all other users of the system. This includes offline changes to bookings.

Vessel tracking

Vessel tracking is now integrated in the AECO Cruise Database and Live Scheduler via the Fleet Map feature. It features AECO vessels of all sizes. The position data comes from AIS and RedPort signals.

You can still use the RedPort interface for vessel tracking of the larger vessels.

Login with the AECO login credentials:

Username: aeco

Password: belug@

Incident reporting

Please observe that it is mandatory to report any relevant incident and non-compliance that you or others observe or are involved in. We also encourage the reporting of near misses. To ensure that incidents are reported in a structured way, please use the AECO incident report form.

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The Incident Report Form can be downloaded on AECO's members-only page. [Incident report form | AECO](#) or requested from AECO.

If you are involved in a serious incident or accident, it is important that you inform AECO without delay.

AECO main contact: aeco@aeco.no

AECO Secretariat contact information: <https://www.aeco.no/contact/>

If you are in doubt whether a situation warrants a report, it is always better to inform AECO than not.

AECO Guidelines

Remember to download the latest versions of all guidelines and make them available to staff and crew. AECO guidelines are also available in the O-VRAT app.

Amended Guidelines

Please note that the following guidelines have been updated for the 2025 season:

- Polar bear Guidelines (currently in development)
- Cetacean Guidelines
- Walrus Guidelines
- Operational Guidelines - new section on Rockfalls (currently in development)

Pre-trip information to guests

AECO recommend including relevant guidelines in your pre-trip information sent to guests such as Visitors Guidelines, Biosecurity Guidelines, embarkation port Community Specific Guideline (if available) and Clean Seas Guidelines.

Beach cleanups

All cleanups must be reported in the Post Visit Report as an activity in the Cruise Database and Live Scheduler and input:

- a. Date, cleanup location and GPS position.
- b. Number of people participating
- c. The amount of litter collected (in kg and/or bags and/or number of pieces); and
- d. Estimate the length of beach that was cleaned.

Please share your cleanup photos with AECO.

If you do share your efforts with the public via social media, tag AECO. You can also use #CleanupSvalbard or #CleanSeas. If you report your cleanup to Rent Hav, remember to use #AECO as well.

Biosecurity

AECO Operational Guidelines are being updated regarding biosecurity and are emphasized due to the presence of HPAI virus (Avian flu/ bird flu) in the Arctic. Disinfectants such as [Virkon](#) are effective against virus such as Avian flu. Familiarize yourself with the proper use of disinfectants as recommended by the manufacturer, including the hazardous nature and proper disposal.

See the [Stop Arctic Aliens campaign](#) for more information and video on biosecurity in the Arctic.

AECO's [Avian Influenza document](#) includes information about the virus and prevention measures

Reports of dead or sick wildlife along with position where the animal was found and a photograph, if possible, should be sent to:

Region	Email	Contact information/authority	Link for submission and other comments
Canada	Use online submission form, reporting application or call reporting hotline appropriate for the location where the case was found.	Reporting hotlines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nunavut, local conservation officer at the Department of the Environment • Northwest Territories, Department of Environment and Natural Resources using the regional wildlife emergency number • Yukon, Turn in Poachers and Polluters (TIPP) at 1-800-661-0525 or online 	Online reporting tool can also be accessed at: https://www.cwhc-rcsf.ca/report_and_submit.php
Svalbard	firmapost@sysselmesteren.no	+47 79024300	No online submission, contact via email or phone in the working hours: Monday-Friday at 10:00-15:00

Iceland	Use online submission form	Use online submission form	https://www.mast.is/en/contact-us
Greenland	info@natur.gl	+299 36 12 00	https://natur.gl/rapporter-til-os/

Citizen Science

Consider getting involved in onboard citizen science activities. Potential projects taking place across the Arctic encompass topics like wildlife, biodiversity, pollution, or atmospheric changes. They can be accessed either through [AECO's website](#), the [Polar Citizen Science Collective website](#) or individual project websites. Examples of popular projects that can be joined are listed below.

- **Aurorasaurus** - tracks auroras around the world via reports on its website and on Twitter
- **eBird** - collects information on bird distribution to support conservation and education efforts
- **Ferrybox** - collects oceanographic data automatically through sensors installed on board
- **Fjordphyto** and **Secchidisk** – collect information on concentration of Phytoplankton
- **Happy Whale** and **Marine Mammals Sighting** – record observation of marine mammals for research and monitoring purposes. The former is a worldwide program while the latter is specific to Svalbard.
- **iNaturalist** - maps and shares observations of biodiversity across the globe with 3.2 million registered users.

Health capacity

The Arctic Health systems have limited capacity. Please follow guidelines from the Regional/National Health Authorities and the below general guidelines to avoid unnecessary strains on local resources:

Please note:

- Hospitals in Greenland, Arctic Canada and in Longyearbyen are presently not able to provide some of the expected services for the local population.
- Not all communities have doctors or nurses available. Only Greenlandic towns may have a doctor. Small settlements cannot provide health services.
- Growing tourism – and especially cruise tourism – is representing extra strains on the local health capacity.

Please apply the below principles and actions in any of the mentioned areas:

- **Avoid sending any passengers/crew/staff to a local hospital/health service**, if the person/issue can be handled onboard (ship doctor/nurse/other)
- Consult with local hospitals or health care providers to check if they can assist.
- If you need to send a patient to the hospital and have a doctor onboard, **the doctor (not the captain or the agent) must call** the hospital to speak with the local doctor.
- **Do not leave any passengers/crew/staff behind in a community or hospital without an accompanying person** who is able to take care of communication, bookings, administration for the patient – if the patient is unable to take care of it themselves. This prevents local hospitals/health services from using their limited capacities on paperwork, booking air transfer, hotels (while waiting for air transfer), translation, and other administration.

Health system information specific to Greenland

- Greenland Health System: [Information 2025](#)

Health System information specific to Longyearbyen Hospital

Limited capacity in Arctic health institutions also applies to Longyearbyen. Please follow [guidelines from Longyearbyen hospital](#) to avoid unnecessary strains on local resources.

Pre-Season Checklist

Have you:

- Registered all relevant personnel for access to the AECO Cruise Database and Live Scheduler
- Registered all core data of trips for the 2025 season in the AECO Cruise Database and Live Scheduler
- Completed all Tasks listed (tick off when completed please) in your tasks list prior to the season.
- Ensured that the correct people in your organization are included in relevant mailing lists and thereby receive information from AECO? (Ask aeco@aeco.no if in doubt)
- Forward staff lists to aeco@aeco.no for registration for the Off-Vessel Risk Assessment Tool (optional).
- Downloaded and become familiar with AECO material for passengers?
 - Animated Visitor Guidelines (mandatory) AECO - Visitors Guidelines on Vimeo.
 - Guideline posters (recommended).
 - Clean Seas animated video (recommended).

Svalbard

Regulatory Updates

“The Svalbard Issue”

“

New environmental regulations applied from January 1, 2025.

Small boat cruising from mother vessel: Exemptions

The Norwegian Maritime Authority has released guidelines on [how to apply for exemptions for vessels carrying 12 passengers or less operating from motherships in the territorial waters surrounding Svalbard](#).

These Guidelines are a renewal of the RSV 2-2024 that was in force for the season 2024. Companies with vessels that have been granted exemptions for the 2020-, 2021-, 2022-, 2023- and/or 2024-seasons according to RSV 7-2020, RSV 25-2020, RSV 13-2021 or RSV 5-2023 or RSV 2-2024 may continue to operate on the same conditions in 2025, without applying for new exemptions.

Polar bear protection

The provision in the Svalbard Environmental Act establishes a general prohibition against unnecessarily disturbing, attracting or pursuing polar bears. In addition, distance requirements have been introduced, and one must keep at least 300 meters away from bears. In the period from March 1 to June 30, one must stay at least 500 meters away. If one discovers a bear at close range, one is obliged to retreat. The obligation to retreat does not apply in inhabited areas, when staying at research stations, cabins, tents or similar facilities.

The requirement for knowledge, security and suitable deterrents is continued in the new provision.

Disturbance: *“Disturbance is not to be interpreted in a limited way such that it is only when the bear is clearly scared and moves away. “According to the wording of the law, “disturbance” includes all situations where the behavior of the polar bear changes as a consequence of human presence. It includes situations where a bear will interrupt what it was doing and switches its attention to the disturbing element instead. For example, getting up from a resting position, interrupt eating or keeps swimming rather than going ashore.”*

To lure: *“Under certain circumstances, if a vessel stops in a way that bear becomes curious and approaches the vessel to investigate further means that one uses the vessel as an attractant in a way that is included in the prohibition.”*

To pursue/seek out: *“The prohibition against “pursuing” polar bears is valid in all cases where you follow a bear. To “seek out”, according to the word of the law, includes moving to a place where one has information that a bear(s) is present.”*

Firearms

The 2023 regulations concerning firearms also apply in 2025:

Import of firearms to Svalbard

If you have a Norwegian licensed weapon, or a weapon with a European Weapon Passport, you can import these to Svalbard without applying to authorities. The Governor may control the licenses/passports in the field.

If you have a weapon registered outside Norway/Europe, you need to apply to the Governor of Svalbard for temporary permission to import these weapons to Svalbard. The application needs to be received at the latest two months prior to importing the weapons (if no European Weapons Passport). In the application, include:

- Weapon licenses
- Information about what the weapon will be used for (polar bear protection).
- Documentation of ownership

- Details about the responsible Firearms Officer:
 - Copy of passport
 - Documentation of weapons knowledge
 - Copy of a clean criminal record of those who will be responsible for firearm, the period this applies.

If permission is granted, the permission will last three months.

Permission to borrow/carry weapons as protection against polar bears

If staff do not have a personal Norwegian Weapon License or is a holder of a European Weapons Passport, they need to apply for a permit from the Governor of Svalbard to borrow and carry weapons.

The permit is applied through the Governor's website for all staff not resident in mainland Norway. For staff residing in mainland Norway, the permit should be applied through their local police district.

To get this permit, the applicant needs to be 18 years of age or older and document competence. There is a NOK 248 handling fee to apply for this permit. Documentation should include:

- Certificate of good conduct (if possible – makes the application process easier).
- Documented safety and weapon training.
- Include information about what the weapon will be used for (polar bear protection).
- The better quality of the documentation (e.g., training and certification), the higher likelihood of getting the permit.
- A criminal record check is required.

Previous permits issued are valid for 2025.

Previous permits issues by the Governor of Svalbard are currently not time limited. A **loan declaration** is the private agreement between the lender and the borrower.

It is not common to issue these for more than a limited period, i.e., only for the exact loan period during which a firearm is needed for polar bear protection.

[utlanserklaring-for-lan-av-skytevapen---engelsk.pdf](#)

Responsible Firearms Officer on board

- There should always be a weapons officer on board.
- The firearms officer shall ensure that those who borrow weapons have a valid loan license, and all loans must be recorded in a protocol to be presented in the event of an inspection.
- The firearms officer is responsible for ensuring that weapons are stored in approved weapons cabinets.
- It is possible to have several firearms officers throughout the season. It is the employer who gives these persons a power of attorney to be Firearms Officers on board.

Other relevant updates

Ny Ålesund 20 km radius silence zone around town

Ny-Ålesund is a radio silent settlement. Use of wireless equipment including Wi-Fi and Bluetooth are not allowed in Ny-Ålesund and 20 km in circumference. These functions search for frequency ranges and interfere with scientific instruments. Turn off WI-FI and Bluetooth on ALL your devices. Including mobile phones, laptops, cameras, digital wristwatches etc. Turn on flight mode. Read more about the restrictions and possibilities for exceptions on the Ny-Ålesund Research Station site: [Restrictions on the use of radio transmitters](#)

Use of drones

Both the Svalbard Environmental Act and the conservation regulations have new rules regarding the use of drones. From 1 April to 31 August, it is not permitted to fly drones closer than 500 meters from bird cliffs, and in protected areas there is a general ban on the use of drones. Please consult [CAA Norway - Drones](#) carefully if considering flying a drone in Svalbard.

Sea charts Svalbard

The Norwegian Mapping Authority has created a separate information page for those who will be traveling by boat in Svalbard. The information page is available in Norwegian and English.

[Sea charts on Svalbard | Kartverket.no](#)

Please note that these charts are now also available in the Cruise Database and Live Scheduler >> Fleet Map.

Guidelines for piloting yacht/pleasure craft

The Norwegian Coastal Administration particularly addresses yachts with flexible itinerary and emphasizes the need and benefit of early booking of pilotage. Follow this [link](#) to their guidelines in this matter.

Operating in areas with infrastructure such as huts, camps, etc.

Respect areas with infrastructure of any kind. It is most often locally utilized infrastructure and AECO Operational and Community Guidelines must be observed:

- 1) Please always respect privacy and private property, and places of religious or cultural significance. *Ref. Community Guidelines*
 - 2) A large group of visitors can easily impact everyday life in small communities, so please be aware of your surroundings. *Ref. Community Guidelines*
- A) Be considerate of other people or activities: avoid landings near camps, trappers, or others, unless contact is established, and the landing is agreed to. *Ref. Operational Guidelines*

Svalbard Cruise Forum

One important measure AECO has taken to advocate for continued expedition cruise operations in Svalbard is engaging in the Svalbard Cruise Forum. All major public and non-public cruise stakeholders are partners in this forum, which main objectives are aimed at minimizing negative impact of tourism, while utilizing opportunities. Crowded airport, harbour and town are among the challenges that will be addressed through

different measures. Members of AECO requested to support these efforts and be flexible, collaborative and solution oriented through the season.

Sharing updated cruise call list

An updated cruise call list is published by Visit Svalbard.

Efforts to increase the purchase of locally made products

See the list of Longyearbyen locally made products through AECO's Made in the Arctic project and from Visit Svalbard (including food, books, soap, jewelry and other souvenirs) and providers. This is part of AECO's efforts to increase the purchase of locally made products that operators and their guests can buy.

Clean Up Svalbard

Prior to the 2025 season, the Governor of Svalbard will provide information on how to plan cleanup action, deal with the waste and register your cleanup in Rent Hav or Rydde. This document will be available on the Governor's website and will be sent to members when published. In addition, the document specifies which areas should not be cleaned and what access restrictions are in place.

Based on the 2024 information, large quantities of waste should be deposited directly in the recycling station in Longyearbyen, while smaller amounts can be deposited in the Cleanup Svalbard (locked) container.

To access the code for the locked container, call the recycling station:

+47 79 02 23 18.

Do not perform any clean ups on beaches located in the forScience Foundation target area, namely between Andvika and Røysneset, as this would interfere with research into marine litter along the western coast of Sørkappland.

Jan Mayen

Prior to visiting Jan Mayen, please consult:

<https://jan.mayen.no/nyheter/guidelines-for-ship-calls-and-visitors-to-jan-mayen-2023/>

Due to extensive construction activities on Jan Mayen from the summer of 2025 through the winter of 2027/2028. Arrival and access to the island will be restricted and limited due to safety reasons.

Please ensure that you confirm you visit well before trip start!

Regulations regarding entering Norwegian territorial waters apply for Jan Mayen.

Please consult this link for further information:

[Jan Mayen](#)

Greenland

Regulatory Updates

New Greenland Tourism Act

The new Greenlandic Tourism Law came into force on 1 January 2025. One of the central elements of the law, among others, is the requirement that tourism businesses must have at least 2/3 local ownership to obtain a license to do tourism activities. Expedition cruising activities outside of the vessel falls into the definition of tourism activities of the law. This means that any off-ship activities arranged by an operator without a license are not allowed without a license. Sailing from A – B with passengers is allowed, but a license is required to do anything else than this. In practical terms it means hiring a company with a license to perform the off-vessel activities for you, if you cannot obtain a license yourself.

It is possible to apply for an exemption to the license requirement for tourism activities, for areas where there are no licensed local operators or for other reasons. AECO is currently not aware of what the exact criteria or procedure for this is.

Please contact The Ministry of Business, Trade, Minerals, Justice, and Equality (isiin@nanoq.gl) for further guidance on this.

Please consult the legislation carefully: [gb-greenland-parliament-act-on-tourism-activities.pdf](#) (unofficial translation).

Northeast Greenland National Park permits

- **Note the new website!** For information on permitting in Greenland please visit [Natur og Selvforsyning](#) to get information.
- The border to the Northeast Greenland National Park extends 3 nautical miles from the coast.
- Entering within the 3 nm zone requires a full set of permits, including if there are no intentions to go ashore.

- Access to remote areas of Greenland, incl. the Northeast Greenland National Park, requires a permit issued by the Expedition Office, Greenland Government.
- Remember to submit the exact start and end dates of any trip going to the national park.
- If start and end dates for a trip are changed after a permit has been received, the correct dates must be submitted to the Expedition Office as soon as possible.
- Please ensure that satellite telephone numbers listed in the permit application to enter the Northeast Greenland National Park are correct.
- If changes to the staff list occur on short notice, the Expedition Office must be informed to amend the entry permit for the Northeast Greenland National Park.
- Be aware that each application to enter the Northeast Greenland National Park is going through a multi-entity hearing and takes time.

Report to the Greenland Government

- After each trip to the National Park, it is a legal requirement to submit an “Expedition Report” to the Expedition Office. Failure to do so may influence approval of future permits.

Firearms

- Only manual repeater rifles, minimum cal. 30.06, are allowed as self-defence against polar bears in the Northeast Greenland National Park. No other type of firearm or calibre smaller than this is accepted in the national park. Even if a permit for other types of firearms is issued by the Greenland Police Department.
- In case other types/calibres of firearms are carried on board, separate firearms permit has to be issued by the Greenland Police Department, even if not in use on shore.

Importing firearms and permits

- Import of firearms to Greenland requires an import permit from the Greenland Police. The permit is required for firearms carried onboard, regardless of the National Park in NE Greenland is visited or not.

- **Manual bolt action repeater rifles** are generally exempt from requiring an import permit **outside** of the national park. If visiting the National Park firearms permits for manual bolt action repeater rifles are required.
- Firearms permits issued by the Greenland Police Department are personal and cannot be used by other people other than the person stated in the permit.
- The person to which a firearms permit is issued must be on board the vessel during the trip for which the permit is valid.

Change of plans

- Vessels operating in the Northeast Greenland National Park are requested on a voluntary basis to inform JRCC Greenland of significant changes from the pre-submitted voyage plan to aid in potential Search and Rescue operations.

Immigration

- Operators and shipping companies must be aware that entry visa regulations for Greenland are in place. These must be followed by crew, staff, and guests alike. Entry visas can take up to 45 days to process.
- Greenland Police has provisionally decided to give permission to entry into Greenland for temporary shore leave while the ship is in port for seafarers who is in possession of the seafarer identity documents according to the International Labour Organization (ILO's) C 108 – Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 1958 (No. 108) or C 185 Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003. The entry needs to be in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code) (codification) appendix VII, point 3.
- Crew and staff from visa-requiring nationalities transiting through Greenland must follow visa regulations.

Passenger, Environmental and Maintenance Fees

- All tax and fee reporting requirements conducted via the new online portal **Talippoq**
 - (please ask your port agent for details)
- Overview of Locations subject to environmental and maintenance fees
- Specific sites subject to environmental and maintenance fees, Kommune Kujalleq

Polar bear regulations

As of 6 March 2023, a law has been in place specifying the conditions around polar bears and tourism. It replaces a law from 2018 which was the first time the section on disturbance of polar bears was added to the text.

The section concerning the protection of polar bears regarding tourism reads (unofficial translation):

Disturbance of polar bears

§4. It is forbidden to lure, seek out, pursue, or otherwise disturb polar bears.

PCS. 2. However, it is permitted to seek out and pursue polar bears if this is done in connection with legal trapping and hunting, cf. §8, or as part of an attempt to scare a polar bear away from an inhabited area, cf. subsection 4.

PCS. 3. It is also permitted to seek out polar bears if this is done in connection with paid tourism without trapping together with a resident person with a permit or concession approved by the Self-Government of Greenland, cf. Act on Concession for Tourist Businesses. A distance of at least 200 meters must be kept from polar bears.

PCS. 4. It is forbidden to prevent or interfere with the work of police, hunting officers, municipal officers or other authorized persons in scaring problem polar bears away from an inhabited area.

Recommendation from the Greenland Government to avoid disturbance of narwhals in North and East Greenland

When travelling inside the National Park of North and East Greenland, in Scoresby Sound and in the inshore waters of the Blosseville Coast special attention must be taken in order to avoid disturbance of the highly sensitive and endangered narwhals.

In order to avoid unnecessary disturbance of narwhals The Ministry for Agriculture, Self-sufficiency, Energy and Environment recommends that cruise ships and other vessels follow the guidelines outlined below while sailing in Scoresby Sound and in the inshore waters of the Blosseville Coast:

- Sailing in Kangerlussuaq Fiord and the innermost parts of Scoresby Sound must be avoided at all times due to the vulnerable population of narwhals that are exceptionally sensitive to anthropogenic noise. These highly sensitive areas are shown in red in Figure 1.
- It is highly recommended not to exceed 5 knots while sailing in the inshore waters of the Blosseville coast and the inner part of Scoresby Sound. These sensitive areas are shown in orange in Figure 1.
- It is highly recommended to deploy a dedicated marine mammal observer at all times while sailing in summer areas for narwhals.
- If narwhals or belugas are observed, special caution should be taken in order to minimize the disturbance. If possible, the route should be changed and fiords with sightings of narwhals or belugas should not be entered.
- It is highly appreciated and recommended that all observations of narwhales and beluga in East Greenland are reported to Greenland Institute of Natural Resources: info@natur.gl.



Figure 1: Summer areas for narwals used in the ice-free period

Other relevant updates

Rockslide risks in the Uummannaq area

Situational updates on the risk of major rockslides in the Karrat Fjord and Kangerluarsuk Fjord are now issued monthly by the Greenland Mineral Authority:

Situation Assessment – Wednesday, 2 April 2025 | Mineral Resources Authority - Naalakkersuisut

(Please scroll to relevant month!)

You can also find the list under the restrictions for the relevant areas in the Cruise Database and Live Scheduler and the in the O-VRAT app.

Community visits

Operators are encouraged to reach out to communities in advance of the visit, share planned dates and activities and align expectations to allow both staff and communities to best prepare for the visit. For members in need of contact information for Greenland, please use the [list of contact information for the regional Destination Management Organizations \(DMO's\)](#).

Please note that neither local communities, DMO's, or port authorities in Greenland have access to the AECO Scheduler. Most communities are informed of planned calls through Visit Greenland's cruise call list, which is based on lists from the port agencies. If you do not use a local port agency, it is important to make sure that your planned visits are registered by Visit Greenland. Contact address to Visit Greenland is: info@visitgreenland.com.

Zoning

Areas in Greenland may be limited to certain types of access due to environmental, social or cultural concerns. New zones are expected to be implemented from 2025 and forward. All operators are advised to consult with their port agency on a regular basis for potential updates during the season.

Greenland cruise call list

Visit Greenland shares [cruise call lists for all Greenland destinations](#). These lists are the main source of information on planned calls for local communities. Should you notice wrong dates or times for your calls, please inform your port agent or Visit Greenland directly.

Local service providers and producers

Visit Greenland has started a list of local providers of services and products. Please refer to this list to find potential local providers. AECO supports increased local value creation and better opportunities for operators and guests to buy local products.

The provider list is found at: https://traveltrade.visitgreenland.com/cruise-call-list-2-2/#cruise_operators

Waste management

Throughout Greenland waste management capacity is limited. Operators are generally advised to be aware of limiting offload of waste in Greenland. Specifically, be mindful of chemical, electronic, hazardous or other types of waste which may be difficult to manage locally.

Port of Nuuk capacity limitations

The Port of Nuuk has limited berth capacity. In certain periods throughout the year demand exceeds available wharf capacity. The Port reserves the right to coordinate and reduce lay time, move vessels to anchor or alter berth position to provide most vessels the possibility to load/discharge.

Visits to military stations

Visits are no longer granted to the four Danish Defence military installations located in the National Park in East Greenland: Station Mestersvig, Station Daneborg, Station Nord and Station Ella Ø (military facilities are limited to the area east of the river Hundeeleven. The river “Hundeeleven” is a local name for the stream running through the central parts of the station infrastructure). Please inform Joint Artic Command in case of visits to the civilian part of Station Ella Ø via email: FKO-KTP-AKO@MIL.DK

Request to visit Station Grønnedal located in South Greenland only via email: FKO-KTP-AKO@MIL.DK

Time zones

There are four time zones in Greenland:

The regular time zone for Greenland is UTC -2.

Ittoqqortoormiit, the Ittoqqortoormiit Fjord is UTC -1

Pituffik Air Base UTC -4

Danmarkshavn UTC +0

Greenland National Museum & Archives resource page for cruise ships

The NKA has started a new resource page for cruise ships. It is still in a beta version but do check it out!

<https://en.nka.gl/cruise-ship-resources-beta/>

Local DMO's Greenland

Please consult this link for up-to-date contact information on local DMO's in Greenland:

[List of DMOs in Greenland | Traveltrade - Visit Greenland](#)

Canada

Regulatory Updates

How to receive safety bulletins and regulatory updates throughout the season

There are numerous important updates from the Canadian Marine Advisory Council (CMAC) throughout the operational season. To make sure you receive these updates, please send an email to cmacccmc@tc.gc.ca to be added to the National CMAC distribution list. As a measure to avoid unnecessary emails, AECO will no longer be forwarding these.

Vessel clearance reporting requirements

- Transport Canada requests that all vessel communication occur via NORDREG from the Master or the designated officer. Regional Duty officers are not to be cc'd on such communication.
- Report to NORDREG at least 24 hours before entering Canadian waters.

Visual Ice Conditions

Transport Canada will accept vessels providing us with visual ice conditions.

For vessels to send visual ice conditions, the following is required:

- The pictures sent should have a timestamp.
- The master should send pictures at three-hour intervals or whenever the ice conditions change.
- Pictures sent should include the orientation, for example, specifying whether the picture is taken from the bridge front or the side of the vessel.

New greywater and blackwater measures

For the 2025 cruise ship season, cruise ships will also be subject to discharge requirements that will be outlined in an upcoming Ship Safety Bulletin (expected to be similar to what was issued in 2024 - Ship Safety Bulletin No.15/2024. [Now in force: Discharge requirements for cruise ships - SSB No.: 15/2024 \(canada.ca\)](#)). Please

review the latest SSB before transiting at the TC website [Ship Safety Bulletins](#)[Ship Safety Bulletins](#).

Other relevant updates

Updates places of refuge

Transport Canada has updated the national places of refuge contingency plan.

Eclipse Sound No-Go Zone

A decision regarding the continuation of the no-go zone has not been reached. Look out for an update prior to the Canadian Arctic season.

Underwater Sound Project in Eclipse Sound

Over the past two seasons, about 10 AECO member vessels participated in the University of San Diego's underwater sound measurement project in Eclipse Sound. Data was shared with operators who participated so they can learn more about the sound produced by their vessels. The Mittimatalik Hunter and Trapper Organization encourages participation in the project.

Information on how to participate in the project in 2025 will be circulated prior to the season.

Record Marine Mammal Sightings

Visit navigatingwhales.ca to use the observation entry tool to register your sightings and view your data on the virtual map, alongside all other sightings. You can also access the online whale ID training and data gathering protocols.

Visits to Clyde River

For safety reasons, the Hamlet Council has decided to ban all Cruise ships, Yachts, sailboats and any non-essential vessels entering Clyde River. Pilitak Enterprises Ltd. are building Small Craft Harbour for the next 5 years. This year will be third year Small Craft Harbour is being built. Haul trucks are going back and forth from using the main road from other side to the dock.

Visits to Pond Inlet

The Hamlet wishes that operators do not use the small craft harbor for Zodiac operations. The harbor is intended for locals.

Visits to Morin Point

Morin Point Thule site (QdHh-2) will not be available for site visitation as this site is too fragile and unstable to sustain tourism activities

Visits to Qikiqtaruk- Herschel Island Territorial Park

Yukon Parks is issuing the following criteria for cruise ships to be permitted to call at Qikiqtaruk- Herschel Island Territorial Park in 2025.

Cruise companies must meet the following criteria to receive a Park Use Permit for 2025:

- Complete screening by the Environmental Impact Screening Committee [EISC - Environmental Impact Screening Committee](#)
- Obtain a Wilderness Tourism License from Yukon Government [Apply for a wilderness tourism licence and submit trip reports | Government of Yukon](#)
- Obtain a Commercial Recreation Park Use Permit [Get a territorial park permit | Government of Yukon](#)

and

- Date of call between August 8- September 4, 2025

and

- Qikiqtaruk- Herschel Island Territorial Park cannot accommodate and therefore, will not permit, more than:
 - 6 individual vessels per season
 - 1 individual vessel per day
 - 2 consecutive days with individual vessels (ex. If vessels are calling Aug 22, Aug. 23, no vessel will be permitted for Aug 24)

In order to call on Qikiqtaruk- Herschel Island Territorial Park each vessel MUST have a valid park use permit.

Operations in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR)

See the [ISR Cruise Management Plan](#) for information and regulations on marine environmental protection, community and shore visitation, monitoring and enforcement and contact information.

Operations in the Nunavik marine region (NMR)

Operators going to this region should read the [letter from the Nunavik Marine Region Planning Commission](#) and the [Nunavik Marine Region Planning Commission Guidelines for Proponents](#).

Ice Office dates 2025

Please note that the Montreal Ice Office – Arctic region is operational as of June 9th, 2025.

- Presentations are available on the E-NAV portal as of June 11th. Daily calls began on Monday, June 18th, at 14:30 UTC. Information about icebreakers' planned operations and covered areas will be shared. The Ice Specialist will present the weather forecast and ice conditions. <https://navigation-electronique.canada.ca/topics/ice/daily-briefings>

The Ice Operations Officer and the Ice Specialist can be reached at the following addresses and numbers:

- o Icebreaking Operations Officer: 514-283-2784 or by email at DFO.CCGIceOpsArctic-OpsGlaceArcticGCC.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
- o Ice Specialist: 514-283-1752 or by email at ssgarctique-issarctic@ec.gc.ca

Please get in touch with the Ice Office at DFO.CCGIceOpsArctic-OpsGlaceArcticGCC.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca if you wish to be on the distribution list and attend the daily calls.

Iceland

Regulatory updates

Infrastructure fee for cruise passengers

Cruise lines must pay ISK 2500 per passenger/ per 24 hours in Icelandic waters. Please consult your port agent for further details on how this payment is collected.

Procedure:

1. The document is available online, in Icelandic only, filled in by agent.
2. The document must be handed in after each circle / voyage.
Ex. if cruise ship route 10 circles / voyage – the ship or agent must hand in 10 documents.
3. The settling period is same day as departure from the country (12 miles)

A permit is needed for zodiac cruising.

For boats under 6 meters in length the operator must obtain an authorization from [ICETRA](#). The application shall contain a description of the operation, information on relevant insurance, a security plan etc. The authorization is valid for all boats falling under the same application.

Application forms are in Icelandic, so it is recommended to seek assistance from agents. Using zodiacs to transport passengers from mother vessel to land does **not require a permit**. If you have planned zodiac cruising (sightseeing) in Iceland, we advise you to contact your port agency.

SafeSeaNet procedures

All passenger ships, over 300 GT, shall notify the Icelandic Maritime Traffic Service (Icelandic Coast Guard) of their estimated route to the next port, 24 hours before they arrive at the first port in Iceland. Additionally, they must inform the Maritime Traffic Service where and when they intend to disembark passengers outside the ports. It is recommended that such notifications reach the maritime watch station with 24 hours

notice before arriving at the first port. The information should accompany the ship's notifications to the Icelandic Maritime Administration, SafeSeaNet.

Customs exemptions for cruise ships (heads up)

In December 2023, Althingi voted to remove customs exemptions for cruise ships. AECO was able to push this item taking effect until January 1st, 2025 (and not 2025 as was proposed). This would only affect operators doing circumnavigations, which will be considered a domestic operation. AECO is currently working to get clarifications on what this includes.

Port updates

Updated 2025 unless otherwise stated

Port	Shore Power	Passenger caps	Other information
Akureyri	<p>Pier Tangabryggja (2026-2027) will be able to provide 1,5 MVA Low Voltage Shore Connection on 400-440-690 V and 50 or 60 Hz according to IEC-PAS 80005-3 standard. 11 kV receptacles will be provided in two locations on the pier, where Port of Akureyri will provide a movable container solution in two container solutions.</p> <p>One container will provide the 60 Hz and the other will provide 400-440 or 690v and up to 1,5 MVA power through four 350A standard receptacles built into the container.</p> <p>Pier Torfunefsbyggja (2027) will be able to provide 1,5 MVA Low Voltage Shore Connection on 400-440-690 V and 50 or 60 Hz according to IEC-PAS 80005-3 standard.</p>	<p>Akureyri: 5000 to 7000 pax per day for.</p> <p>Grímsey Island: only 1 ship per time.</p> <p>Hrísey Island only 1 ship per time.</p>	<p>Pier Torfunefsbyggja, new cruise pier for expedition ships up to 145 m. The pier is only 50 meters from downtown. The plan is that the pier will be ready for the cruise season 2025.</p>
Húsavík	No shore power and not yet completed a plan for it.	No more than three ships at a time.	
Fjarðabyggð	Shore power is not available in Port of Eskifjörður (or other ports of Fjarðabyggð) and there are no plans to install soon.	<p>Port limitations are bound to the length of the ships.</p> <p>No booking of ships on anchorage/tender</p>	

		boats. Maximum length of ships is 240 m. One ship in port at a time.	(Updated 2024)
Reykjanesbaer/ Keflavik	There will be no shore power for ships this year, only fishing boats.	Port of Reykjanes accepts only one ship at a time, maximum number of passengers 3-600.	The harbor is within the Reykjanes UNESCO GeoPark and offers many natural wonders within a 20 km radius. Today there is a volcanic eruption 20 minutes' drive from the port. These days, there are an irregular volcanic eruptions in the immediate vicinity.
Þorlákshöfn	Current shore power is 125amp but by the end of this summer 250amp will be available for two berths (200 meters).	No limitations in place	A new pier, 170 meters, is being build and it is expected to be completed during 2024. It will have a 250 amp and 125 amp shore power connection. (Updated 2024)
Isafjörður	Port of Isafjordur can not provide shore power at the moment. But is planned in the future.	From 2025 a maximum of 7000 passengers per day will be introduced.	(Updated 2024)
Múlaþing Municipality	Work is ongoing to install shore power for smaller cruise vessels in Seyðisfjörður. It is expected to be up and running for in 2025.	Seyðisfjörður 3500 pax per day. Djúpivogur 2500 pax per day. Bakkagerði 500 pax per day.	No new developments for this coming season, but in Seyðisfjörður there are plans to extend the main cruise pier in the near future. (Updated 2024)
Siglufjörður	No shore power available.		Only one ship can be docked at a time. Anchorage possible if pier occupied. Expedition ships only.
Grundarfjörður	No shore power available.	Max. 4000 passengers per day.	Completed extension of Norðurgarð.
Faxaflóa Hafnir	For information on the port please see this link: Cruise information Faxaflóahafnir / Reykjavík harbour (faxafloahafnir.is)		(Updated 2024)
Sauðárkrókur	No shore power available		Only one ship can be docked at a time. Anchorage possible if pier occupied.

HofsósAnchorage only!

Other relevant updates

Hornstrandir Nature Reserve reminder

The Environmental Agency in Iceland asks that everyone remembers the restrictions associate with operations in the Hornstrandir Nature Reserve. Information is available in the AECO Cruise Database and Live Scheduler and the O-VRAT app.

Special rules are in place regarding group sizes on land, where in the east part of the nature reserve, only 15 people can be in a group, to protect vegetation. Also, rules are set about the sizes of vessels that can take land. Landing of vessels with 51 or more passengers (passengers + crew) and vehicles associated with them is prohibited with in the nature reserve.

It is also noted that cruise ships operating in the fjords for many hours at a time and cruise the coastline with zodiacs, are not working in the spirit of the area and are in many ways harming the experience of other visitors and the local businesses. It is the wish of the local community that this activity does not take place within the nature reserve.

DOKK port booking

Cruise Iceland has launched a new [port booking overview](#). Port bookings are made through port agents, and the system allows everyone interested to view bookings in most ports and into the future.

Guidelines for masters of cruise and passenger ships arriving in Iceland

Please see an [updated version of the guidelines from 2022](#).

AECO has submitted comments for the 2025 revision and will notify members once a new version is published.

Clean Up Iceland

AECO members participating in [AECO's Clean Up Iceland project](#) will be picking up marine litter on selected shorelines this season. Contact aeco@aeco.no if you're interested in participating.

All members need to report cleanup efforts using the [AECO Clean Up Report Form](#) and send it to aeco@aeco.no.

Látrabjarg maritime restrictions

Remember that approaching the bird cliff at Látrabjarg is not allowed. Information is available in the AECO Cruise Database and Live Scheduler and the O-VRAT app.

New Community Specific Guidelines for Borgarfjörður-Eystri (Bakkagerði)

These guidelines are now mandatory after being accepted by the 2024 AGM.

Local DMO's Iceland

Please consult this link for up to date contact information on local DMO's in Iceland:

[Mannamót markaðsstofanna](#) (scroll down)

North Iceland arnheidur@nordurland.is

South Iceland ragnhildur@south.is

East Iceland alexandra@austurbru.is

West Iceland kristjan@west.is

Westfjords solvi@vestfiridir.is

Reykjanes thura@visitreykjanes.is

Capital area inga@reykjavikandpartners.is

AECO's Secretariat

Visiting AECO

AECO's Head Office is in Tromsø. You are more than welcome to contact us in Tromsø or visit us in our offices. Contact: aeco@aeco.no

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