



# **INFORMATION FOR VISITORS TO SOUTH GEORGIA 2013/14**

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# SOUTH GEORGIA INFORMATION FOR VISITORS 2012

## Administration

South Georgia is a United Kingdom Overseas Territory. It is administered by the Commissioner for South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands based in Stanley in the Falkland Islands. In this task he is supported by Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI) staff in Stanley and Government Officers at King Edward Point (KEP) on South Georgia, who are responsible for the local administration on the island.

This document is intended to provide a general overview of the South Georgia visit application procedures and provide information on relevant Government visitor policies. This document should be read in conjunction with the current GSGSSI Biosecurity Protocols document. Persons wishing to access documentation or learn more about South Georgia should refer to the website [www.sgisland.gs](http://www.sgisland.gs)

*Visitors travelling to South Georgia as paying passengers on cruise ships and yachts should note that they do not need to submit a visit application; their vessel operator submits this on their behalf.*

Before planning a visit to South Georgia, all potential visitors and commercial operators should take note of the following Government advice:

All travel has inherent risks, but travel to South Georgia carries a greater level of risk than to many, more traditional, destinations. There is no airstrip, nor is there any search and rescue or other emergency service on the island.

The limited medical facilities at KEP provide medical cover for base personnel only and emergency cover for fishing vessels. All other vessels must be self sufficient in every respect, including provision of adequate medical cover. In an emergency, there might be the possibility of accessing some degree of medical assistance from KEP, but this must never be relied upon.

There is no independent transport from South Georgia to the Falkland Islands or to South America, which are at least three or five days sail away respectively. Commercial operators must ensure that all clients are aware of the medical evacuation limitations.

With the exception of certain Government supported field parties, GSGSSI requires all visitors to be self-sufficient and have a dedicated support vessel in attendance throughout the duration of their visit. The granting of a visit permit does not imply that the Government accepts responsibility for providing any additional support.

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**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR FISHING VESSELS:** Special conditions apply to fishing vessels in South Georgia waters. Please contact the Director of Fisheries [dof@gov.gs](mailto:dof@gov.gs) for an information pack and details of the licensing procedure.

Fishing vessels in transit through South Georgia waters must report entry and exit into the Maritime Zone, and declare any fish on board, to the Government Officer at King Edward Point. Failure to do so could result in prosecution.

## Applications and Preparations for Visits

A permit from the Commissioner is required for visits to South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. The visit permit is issued to a 'Permit Holder', normally a cruise vessel expedition leader or a yacht master. Permits have conditions attached and failure to comply with these conditions could lead to site access restrictions, withdrawal of the permit or prosecution. An application to visit must be made in writing by completing the South Georgia Visit Application Form. This form may be obtained from GSGSSI or the Government website ([www.sgisland.gs](http://www.sgisland.gs)). (Individual passengers on cruise ships and charter yachts do not need to apply to visit, the permit for the vessel covers all passenger landings.)

The visit application forms include details of the approved landing and visitor sites for which permission may be sought to visit. All applicants must study the South Georgia Tourism Management Policy document (Annex 1) before submitting their application. Operators of IAATO Category 2 vessels should note the sites to which their vessels are permitted access.

A separate Biosecurity Protocols document details Closed Areas. Permission will not normally be given for landings at any closed area or site. Special permission must also be sought for landings at the two approved restricted landing sites (Prion Island and Cape Rosa), which have access restrictions.

Visitors intending to spend nights ashore are classed as expeditions and require a separate application and assessment procedure for an expedition permit. Expedition application information may be obtained from GSGSSI or the Government website ([www.sgisland.gs](http://www.sgisland.gs)). All applications for science projects should be sent directly to GSGSSI and will be administered separately.

Thorough preparation is essential for yachts undertaking voyages to South Georgia. Visiting yachts must be appropriately constructed, rigged and fitted for high latitude sailing and only suitably experienced skippers and crew should consider such visits. Yacht skippers who are not regular visitors to South Georgia should refer to the following websites:

<http://iaato.org/yachts/> (preparation and responsibilities, & guidelines.)

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/3849543/antarctica-yachting-guidelines>

All media and commercial photographers and film productions are required to submit a written application and environmental assessment before a letter of permit for filming will be issued. This process should be completed before the visit permit is issued for the supporting vessel. Commercial film production and photographic teams (or individuals) should contact GSGSSI directly to request permission (and if necessary they should also be directed to do so by their vessel operator.) A daily fee is charged for commercial film projects (Annex 7). Production companies are reminded that commercial support vessels must be members of IAATO, unless an alternative arrangement has been agreed with GSGSSI and appropriate approved observer coverage is in place.

Unless a visit applicant has an agent in Stanley authorised to pay fees, the permit holder will normally need to have sufficient funds (pounds sterling, USD or Euros in cash or travellers' cheques) to pay visitor fees for all on board (Annex 7). Applicants for vessels carrying more than 12 passengers are reminded that they will be invoiced for 50% of the projected visitor fees in advance of their visit. Visitors intending to land must be in possession of either a

valid passport, national identity card or seaman's book. No visa is required to visit South Georgia.

Visit applicants should also be aware that in addition to the aforementioned requirement for adequate medical cover, visitors should not approach the KEP doctor with requests for the provision of medication. All visitors taking prescription medication should also ensure that they carry adequate supplies when going ashore (in order to cover any unexpected delays). In the event that an emergency request is made for the provision of medication and this is supplied, a substantial administrative fee will be incurred.

## **Passage to South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands**

The island of South Georgia (and the South Sandwich Islands) is surrounded by a Maritime Zone, which includes all waters within 200nm of territorial baselines around the islands. On entering the Maritime Zone the vessel's master or permit holder must report to the Government Officer who is based at King Edward Point (KEP) in Cumberland East Bay.

KEP Government Officer contact details:

- E-mail: go@gov.gs
- Telephone: 00870 382 359 033 (Inmarsat) or 0044 1223 221781 (VOIP)
- Fax: 00870 382 359 034
- Telex: 580 492 348 018 (Inmarsat C)
- Iridium: 00881 631831394
- HF frequency: 4049 kHz USB (note that there is no dedicated listening watch)

The Government Officer will require the following information:

- Vessel name & radio call sign
- Type of vessel e.g. cruise ship, yacht, fishing vessel, research vessel, reefer etc.
- Date and time of intended arrival at King Edward Point in Cumberland East Bay
- Purpose of visit

## **Arrival at South Georgia**

Unless the Commissioner has already given permission in writing to do otherwise, the first port of call in South Georgia must be King Edward Point / Grytviken where the Government Officer will carry out immigration procedures, arrival briefings and other formalities.

On arrival at Grytviken the Government Officer should be contacted on VHF Channel 16. The Government Officer will board the vessel to give an arrival briefing and complete arrival and customs formalities, including issuing invoices for fees (and the receipt of any cash payments.) A copy of the crew and passenger lists must be available. The Government Officer will also ask for the signed Visit Permit Holder Landing Declaration (Annex 5) as well as the Biosecurity Declaration Form (see separate Biosecurity Protocols document) signed by all persons going ashore. The Government Officer is likely to also undertake a biosecurity inspection on the vessel before any landing is made. Rigorous application of all biosecurity

measures is essential before a vessel's arrival. Failure to do so could result in a prosecution. **Be vigilant for any evidence of rodents on your vessel. The Government Officer at King Edward Point must be contacted in advance of arrival if there is any concern or suspicion about the presence of rodents on a vessel.**

Charges are levied for customs, harbour and visitor fees, transshipping and water (Annex 7). Payment may be made via a shipping agent in Stanley, Falkland Islands (or on request directly to GSGSSI). Alternatively payment may also be made to the Government Officer in pounds sterling in the form of cash, Falkland Islands cheque or travellers' cheques; or in United States dollars or Euros as cash or travellers' cheques.

A visitor fee is charged for each person (16 years old and over) named on the passenger list of cruise ships and yachts, this includes privately owned vessels (Annex 7). This fee is payable by the Master or permit holder directly to the Government Officer or by the vessel's agent in Stanley. No charge is made for any professional (employed) crew or staff on a vessel. Revenue collected in this way contributes to the costs of administering the Territory as well as conservation and heritage projects including the running costs of the South Georgia Museum and maintenance of the buildings at Grytviken.

### **Biosecurity**

**Permit Holders must study closely the separate Biosecurity Protocols document and ensure all biosecurity measures are in place before departing South Georgia. Failure to do so may constitute an offence under the Wildlife and Protected Areas Ordinance (2011).**

## **Shore and Harbour Facilities**

The only facilities for visitors ashore are at Grytviken and King Edward Point (KEP). There is no on-shore accommodation for visitors to the island, nor are there public telephone, fax or internet facilities.

### **Jetties**

A jetty is available at Grytviken for visiting yachts and tenders (the Tijuca jetty). A jetty is also available at King Edward Point at the discretion of the Government Officer. However, due to biosecurity issues, the only ships permitted to come alongside tend to be Government vessels. Any vessel granted permission to use the KEP jetty will be required to follow rigorous biosecurity protocols and may incur charges.

### **Water**

Water is available at the King Edward Point jetty (subject to access restrictions). A charge per tonne is levied, though yachts are not charged (Annex 7). Yachts may also obtain water from the Tijuca jetty at Grytviken.

### **Post Office**

Situated at King Edward Point, the Post Office is run by a Postal Officer or appointed representative, and is open upon request. During cruise ship visits the Post Office service transfers to Grytviken. Philatelic items including stamps, postcards and first day covers are available and mail can be posted if South Georgia stamps of the appropriate value are used, although it may take up to two months or more for items to reach their destination, via the Falkland Islands.

## South Georgia Museum

Established in 1992, the South Georgia Museum at Grytviken is an important centre of interest for visitors. The many photographs and exhibits displayed in the Museum, situated in what was the whaling station Manager's Villa, record the former whaling industry and other aspects of South Georgia's heritage, exploration and natural history. The Church and Cemetery (burial place of Sir Ernest Shackleton) are also focal points for the visitor.

The Museum is funded and maintained by GSGSSI and managed on their behalf by the South Georgia Heritage Trust (SGHT). Museum staff are present in summer to welcome visitors, and in their absence the Government Officer may open the Museum upon request. Souvenir items including postcards, clothing and books are on sale at the Museum shop. Proceeds from sales contribute to SGHT fundraising for heritage projects such as the South Georgia Habitat Restoration project. Admission is free, though donations are gratefully accepted.

Visits to the former whaling station at Grytviken are only possible following a major Government project in 2003/4 to remove hazardous materials and make the site safe to visit. The other former whaling stations at Husvik, Stromness, Leith and Prince Olav Harbour are prohibited areas and strictly closed to public access (see Conduct Ashore and Annex 8.)

## Conduct Ashore & Management of Visitors

### Management of landings

Landings may only be made at approved landing sites. Permit holders must refer to their permit and check the approved list in the visitor application information. The Conduct Whilst Ashore and Wildlife Protection Guidelines (see below) must be strictly followed at all times. Visit permit holders on IAATO vessels must also ensure their staff and visitors adhere to IAATO guidelines and bylaws at all times. All approved landing site Codes of Conduct and existing Site Visitor Management Plans must be adhered to. **It is the responsibility of both visit applicants and visit permit holders to ensure that all their staff are fully briefed and adhere at all times to current visit permit conditions including Codes of Conduct and Visitor Management Plans. Failure to do so will result in the imposition of visit permit and site access restrictions.**

Site Visitor Management Plans should be downloaded by permit holders from the website [www.sgisland.gs](http://www.sgisland.gs). These cover Cape Rosa, Cooper Bay Macaronis, Fortuna Shackleton Walk, Fortuna Whistle Cove, Godthul, Gold Harbour, Salisbury Plain, St Andrews Bay). The Code of Conduct for Prion Island is included in this document (Annex 2). A review of these plans is in progress. Visit applicants and permit holders should always consult the website each season to ensure that they are referring to the current documentation.

No overnight stays ashore are permitted, except by authorised expeditions (see Application section). Emergency refuge huts are for emergency use only. Any use of the huts and their contents must be reported immediately to the Government Officer who can arrange replenishment. Huts must be kept securely fastened at all times to prevent entry by wildlife and reduce damage from the elements.

**It is strictly forbidden to approach within 200m of the old whaling stations at Leith, Stromness, Husvik and Prince Olav Harbour. This includes approach from the sea and the use of old jetties at these stations is therefore prohibited. The buildings and jetties are in a highly dangerous state of disrepair and there is a high risk of exposure to airborne asbestos.**

**Prohibited Areas legislation (2010) makes it an offence to enter these areas without permission. Visit permit holders and visitors must refer to this legislation (available on the GSGSSI website) and to the maps attached to the Order (Annex 8) if in any doubt about the demarcation of these areas.**

All cruise ship and charter vessel shore parties should stay in radio contact with the ship and have with them appropriate medical and emergency equipment and trained and experienced staff. Deteriorating weather or sea conditions may, for example, make return to the ship hazardous and necessitate a longer stay ashore than planned. Vessel operators & charterers should review all major incident and contingency plans on a regular basis.

Unexploded ordnance from the 1982 conflict and subsequent military exercises may be found on South Georgia. Visitors finding any item of unexploded ordnance or suspect item should carry out the following procedure:

DO NOT TOUCH (items are in a dangerous condition).

Note its position and grid reference and place a marker nearby; a GPS plot is ideal.

Make a note of its size, shape, colour, markings, condition and quantity; a digital photo can help.

Inform the Government Officer as soon as possible.

## **Code of Conduct Whilst Ashore**

When ashore:

- Visitors must know their capabilities and also the dangers posed by South Georgia's environment, and act accordingly. Plan activities with safety in mind at all times.
- Visitors should take note of, and act on, the advice and instructions from leaders and staff. Do not stray from the group.
- Be prepared for severe and changeable weather. Ensure that equipment and clothing are of sufficient strength and quality to withstand Antarctic conditions. South Georgia's weather is unpredictable, when ashore be prepared for the worst, however pleasant it may seem when setting out.
- Do not walk on to glaciers or snowfields without proper equipment and experience. Surface conditions are constantly changing, particularly in the present period of glacial retreat.
- Fully adhere to the Wildlife Protection Guidelines at all times (see separate Wildlife Protection guidelines).
- Avoid walking on fragile vegetation. A footprint on a moss bank may remain there a long time; trampling of vegetation, especially in wet and peaty soils, can cause significant erosion over time. Moss beds and the margins of streams and lakes are particularly fragile.



- Do not collect any items. This includes plants, skulls, bones, teeth or eggs. No items or scientific specimens may be removed from South Georgia without an export permit from GSGSSI under the Wildlife and Protected Area Ordinance. The removal of any item without a permit is an offence.
- Be careful when taking photographs or filming. Never disturb plants or animals to get better pictures.
- Always give wildlife the right of way, (see wildlife protection guidelines).
- Firearms may not be brought into South Georgia, except with the written permission of the Commissioner.
- Remove all rubbish.
- Do not pollute lakes or streams.
- Do not remove, disturb or destroy any historical artefacts.
- Do not paint or engrave names or graffiti on rocks or buildings; or deface or vandalise any field huts or other structures.
- Avoid marked sites where scientific experiments are being conducted and do not disturb any scientific equipment.
- Do not smoke where there might be any risk of starting a fire in buildings or vegetation. Do not light camp fires.

## **Wildlife Protection Guidelines**

ALL visitors including tourists, scientists, government staff, journalists, military personnel, ships' crews and tourism staff must aim to minimise their personal impact on the environment by observing the following guidelines. IAATO staff must also ensure that all IAATO codes of conduct are fully adhered to.

- Do not disturb mammals or birds and always maintain a respectful distance.
- Do not use vessels, small boats, or other means of transport in ways that disturb wildlife, whether at sea or on land.
- Stay on the edge of animal groups, approaching slowly and quietly. Avoid surrounding the groups. Back-off immediately if mammals or birds show any sign of being disturbed. If animals are responding to your presence then you are too close.
- Never disturb seals in breeding colonies or territorial seals in order to affect a landing (or cause disturbance by cruising offshore in close proximity).
- Do not offer food to any animal. (This avoids animals becoming dependent on unnatural food sources, prevents the spread of avian diseases and protects visitors from potential injury).
- Always rigorously adhere to all biosecurity measures (see separate Biosecurity Protocols document).
- Be alert while ashore and particularly in the tussock grass. Always remain vigilant to avoid stumbling inadvertently upon a fur seal or a nesting bird, or causing damage to seabird burrows, both in tussock and on scree.

- Do not touch or attempt to touch any animals. Such action may cause substantial stress and disturbance, and may jeopardize the bond between parent and offspring and lead to an aggressive response from the animal.

All permit holders must study the Wildlife and Protected Areas Ordinance (2011) (available from [www.sgisland.gs](http://www.sgisland.gs)). Failure to comply with Wildlife Protection Guidelines and Biosecurity Protocols could result in prosecution.

## **Departing from South Georgia**

All vessels should notify the Government Officer at King Edward Point of their departure from South Georgia.

A Post Visit Report form (attached to the visit application document, or provided by the Government Officer) should be completed and returned to the Government Officer at KEP within 30 days of departing South Georgia.

## Annexes

1. Tourism Management Policy
2. Prion Island Code of Conduct
3. Contact addresses
4. Charts and Maps
5. Permit holder landing declaration
6. Private vessel observer coverage
7. Fees and Charges
8. Prohibited Areas Order

## **Annex 1 South Georgia Tourism Management Policy (2013)**

Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands

### **TOURISM MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The principle objective of the tourism management policy for South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands is to enable visitor access, whilst ensuring the continued protection of the island's unique environment, including its flora, fauna and cultural heritage. This is achieved by managing all visitor landings so that authorised visitors may continue to have access to approved landing sites in a safe and regulated manner, whilst minimising any potential impact.

This document sets out general and specific regulations governing visits to South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. It does not apply to visits by GSGSSI and HMG staff, permitted BAS staff, officially-sponsored visitors, members of HM forces or MOD personnel on operational duty, visiting UK / GSGSSI Governmental Research vessels and fishing vessels, (all of which are managed under separate MoU's and permitting arrangements).

Applicants, who believe that exceptional circumstances apply which necessitate a departure from the following, should include details with their applications.

#### **General Principles, which apply to all visits to South Georgia.**

A "visit" is defined as an approach by any vessel within 12nm of territorial baselines. The use of aircraft within 12nm of territorial baselines is prohibited except by permit.

All visits to South Georgia require a permit from the Commissioner. The Commissioner has the authority to revoke, suspend or alter the conditions of a permit (including the itinerary of a visit).

It is the responsibility of the visit applicant to nominate one or more individuals (referred to as 'the Permit Holder'), normally the vessel Expedition Leader or Yacht Master, who will be responsible for all on board during the vessel's time in South Georgia.

All visitors aged 16 years or over, with the exception of professional staff on board a vessel, must pay a visitor fee, unless exempted from doing so by the Commissioner.

All visitors must be vessel borne and no overnight stays ashore are permitted without permission from the Commissioner. Any application to stay overnight ashore will be regarded as an "expedition" and treated accordingly (see the Expedition section).

The operators or owners of all commercial and privately owned vessels wishing to visit South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands must submit a fully completed current "Application to Visit South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands" document. This must clearly specify all dates and proposed itineraries.

Operators or owners of vessels carrying more than 10 persons must ensure the visit application form is submitted to the Office of the Commissioner no later than 60 days

before the intended arrival date in South Georgia. Failure to do so will result in financial penalty.

Any proposed changes to the information submitted with the application must be notified to the Commissioner before the vessel enters the SGMZ.

Landings will only be permitted at those sites specified in a vessel's permit to visit.

All landings must be carried out in accordance with permit conditions and applicable site specific regulations or visitor management documents. Failure to do so could lead to site access restrictions, withdrawal of the permit or prosecution. Permits will only be issued in respect of approved South Georgia landing sites and landings on the South Sandwich Islands will be approved on a case-by-case basis. Where landings are not permitted, zodiac cruising may in certain circumstances be permitted.

All vessels must call at King Edward Point to complete customs and administrative formalities, GSGSSI briefings, biosecurity inspections (as required) and the payment of harbour dues and customs fees as specified in the SGSSI Harbour Administration Charges. Unless otherwise exempted in advance by the Commissioner this must be the first landing in the Territory. Authorisations for exemption will normally only be given to IAATO vessels carrying an Expedition leader who has visited South Georgia in that capacity within the previous 5 years.

All vessels carrying 12 or more passengers must carry a Master or Chief Deck Officer with previous experience of operating in South Georgia or Polar Regions within the previous 5 years.

All applications for vessels to visit must include full major incident contingency plans and details of medical capabilities, including the management of trauma injuries, as well as emergency and medical evacuation contingency plans. These must include vessel operator contact details and vessel contact details. There are no Search and Rescue (SAR) facilities on South Georgia and vessels must be self sufficient in every respect.

All vessel owners and operators are required to have adequate insurance or financial means to cover liability for environmental damage, passenger medical evacuation and rescue and repatriation of passengers. Insurance policy details must be provided with the vessel application. It will be sufficient for visit applicants to ensure that their passengers have adequate insurance to cover medical evacuation and repatriation.

### **Commercial Vessels**

Commercial vessel operations are classed as all vessels carrying fee-paying passengers as well as vessel operators receiving contributions and benefits in kind from any non fee-paying passengers, guests or unpaid crew, which are in excess of an individual's pro rata contribution towards consumables for a voyage.

Vessels carrying in excess of 850 passengers are not permitted to visit South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands or to enter within 12nm of the territorial baselines.

## **Members of IAATO**

IAATO Member Company vessels carrying fewer than 201 passengers (IAATO Category 1) may be permitted to land at approved landing sites, including those restricted sites that require special permission.

IAATO Member Company vessels carrying 201-500 passengers (IAATO Category 2) are not permitted to carry out landings at restricted sites requiring special permission and are only permitted to land at sites approved for IAATO Category 2 ships.

IAATO Member Company (Category CR vessels) carrying 500-850 passengers are permitted to carry out landings at Grytviken only.

Visit permit holders on IAATO vessels must ensure that in addition to any terms and conditions of their visit permit, IAATO operational guidelines are adhered to.

## **Non-members of IAATO**

All non-IAATO commercial vessels are normally only permitted to land passengers at Grytviken\*.

\* For the purposes of this document, a vessel whose operator or owner has Membership of IAATO or B1 Associate Membership will be regarded as an IAATO Member Company vessel.

Under exceptional circumstances, commercial non-IAATO vessels may be given permission to visit South Georgia, if the visit is of a unique nature in support of a specific project, which will not involve the vessel returning to South Georgia. All such vessels will be required to embark a GSGSSI approved observer.

## **Observers**

The Commissioner may designate observers to oversee commercial yachts, cruise ships or expedition vessels on their arrival at King Edward Point or during the whole or part of a vessel's duration in South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands waters. Vessels visiting for the first time, carrying 12 or more passengers and those under new management will, subject to practical considerations, always be required to embark an Observer.

A fee will be charged for vessels requiring the embarkation of an approved observer in order to facilitate access to landing sites.

## **Privately Owned Vessels (Not carrying fee-paying passengers)**

Privately owned vessels carrying 10 persons or less on board (including professional crew) may be permitted to land passengers at all approved landing sites.

Privately owned vessels carrying 11- 20 persons on board (including professional crew) may be permitted to land passengers at approved landing sites, but may only land at restricted sites when accompanied by a GSGSSI designated or approved Observer (to oversee landings).

Privately owned vessels carrying more than 20 persons on board (including professional crew) will only be permitted to land passengers at Grytviken. Landings at all other approved landing sites may be permitted if accompanied by a GSGSSI designated or approved Observer (to oversee landings).

## **Expeditions**

With the exception of GSGSSI and permitted BAS staff, approved HMG staff and MOD personnel on operational duty, all visitors intending to spend nights ashore are classed as expeditions.

Expedition applications must be submitted to the Office of the Commissioner no later than 60 days before an expedition arrives in South Georgia (or the South Sandwich Islands) and will be assessed by a panel of experts who will advise the Commissioner on the application (and whether a permit should be granted).

An administrative fee will be charged for the assessment procedure.

All expeditions must be supported throughout by an expedition support vessel and participants must have adequate personal insurance to include medical evacuation and repatriation. Insurance policy details must be provided with the application. Support vessels must have adequate insurance as specified in the general principles. No support (including Search and Rescue cover) will be available from GSGSSI for expeditions. Expedition groups must be self-sufficient.

A post expedition report must be submitted to GSGSSI within one month of completing an expedition and departing from South Georgia.

## **General policy**

Submission of an application will be taken by GSGSSI to mean that the applicant has read and understood the terms under which permitting operates, and that the vessel and company on whose behalf the application has been made will comply with the terms and conditions of their permit, including ensuring compliance with all regulations governing behaviour ashore.

It is the responsibility of both visit applicants and visit permit holders to ensure that all their staff are fully briefed and adhere at all times to current visit permit conditions including Codes of Conduct and Visitor Management Plans. Failure to comply with the South Georgia visitor policy, legislation, other government regulations, codes of conduct or visitor management plans could result in a permit being immediately revoked, suspended or alterations made to the conditions of a permit (including the itinerary of a visit) and may preclude the possibility, or place restrictions, on future permitting. In some cases prosecutions may be brought.

GSGSSI accepts no liability for the safety of visitors to South Georgia or the South Sandwich Islands. All visits are at the visitors' own risk. It is the responsibility of the Permit Holder to assess the safety of all anchorages, landing sites, activities and structures (e.g. jetties and boardwalks) before use and to advise all visitors in their care or under their responsibility of potential risks. GSGSSI will not accept any liability whatsoever for injury to, or damage

sustained by, any individual, howsoever arising. All visitors must be covered by adequate insurance as outlined above. Visit applicants must also ensure that all clients have been informed about the remote nature of the Territory and medical evacuation limitations.

Post Visit Report forms must be completed and returned either to the Government Officer at King Edward Point or the Office of the Commissioner within 30 days of a vessel's departure from South Georgia.

Vessels must observe the dates specified on permits. If a Permit Holder wishes to change any dates specified on a visit permit (whether for individual sites or the duration of the visit), then the Permit Holder must consult with, and get the agreement of, the Government Officer at KEP before any alterations can be made to itinerary dates or to the IAATO ship scheduler system.

Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands  
May 2013

### **Notes**

A season commences on 1st July and ends on 30th June of the following year.

### **Additional information**

#### Acronyms

GSGSSI	Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
SG	South Georgia
SSI	South Sandwich Islands
HMG	Her Majesty's Government
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
BFSAI	British Forces South Atlantic Islands
SGMZ	South Georgia Maritime Zone
IAATO	International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators

### **Contact details for the Office of the Commissioner**

The Office of the Commissioner  
Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands  
Government House  
Stanley  
Falkland Islands, South Atlantic      FIQQ 1ZZ

Tel: +500 28200  
Fax: +500 28201  
Email: [info@gov.gs](mailto:info@gov.gs)

Details of approved landing sites are attached to visit application forms. These and the details of the Territorial Baselines may also be obtained from the Office of the Commissioner.

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## Annex 2

### CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VISITORS TO PRION ISLAND

1. Prion Island is closed between 20 November and 7 January (inclusive). Access is restricted to permitted yachts and Category 1 IAATO vessels.
2. No more than 2 vessel visits per day. GSGSSI or the Government Officer at KEP will allocate the visiting date, and must be consulted if you wish to change it.
3. No landings other than on the designated landing beach on the east coast of Prion Island, as indicated on Site Map.
4. Thorough biosecurity checks, particularly for rodents, must be undertaken before landing on Prion Island. Great care must be taken if passengers are transferring to Prion Island directly from a landing in a rat-infested area of coastline.
5. The Permit Holder (Expedition Leader on cruise ships) must inspect the landing site and boardwalk before any passengers land and only proceed when satisfied that it is appropriate and safe to do so, without contravening any GSGSSI or IAATO wildlife protection regulations or guidelines.
6. On landing, all persons must proceed directly up the beach to the boardwalk and thereafter remain on the boardwalk at all times, until returning back to the shore for collection.
7. Whilst on the boardwalk visitors must proceed directly and quietly to the viewing platforms.
8. The Permit Holder should maintain a 1:10 staff / passenger ratio ashore (including on the boardwalk).
9. Maximum of 50 people ashore at any one time (passengers and staff).
10. Maximum visit duration 5 hours.

**PRION ISLAND ACCESS AREA**



## Annex 3 Contact Addresses

### **The Commissioner for South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (SGSSI) & Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands**

Government House  
Stanley  
Falkland Islands, South Atlantic  
via UK . FIQQ 1ZZ  
Tel: +500 28200  
Fax: +500 28201  
General Email: info@gov.gs

### **The Government Officer, King Edward Point**

King Edward Point,  
South Georgia  
via Falkland Islands, South Atlantic  
via UK. SIQQ 1ZZ  
Tel: +870 382 359 033  
Fax: +870 382 359 034  
Email: go@gov.gs

### **British Antarctic Survey, Headquarters**

The Director  
British Antarctic Survey  
High Cross  
Madingley Road  
Cambridge CB3 0ET  
United Kingdom  
Tel: +44 1223 221400  
Fax: +44 1223 362616  
Email: information@bas.ac.uk

### **British Antarctic Survey, King Edward Point**

Base Commander  
BAS, King Edward Point  
South Georgia  
via Falkland Islands, South Atlantic  
via UK. SIQQ 1ZZ  
Tel: +870 382 359 031  
Fax: +870 382 359 032

### **South Georgia Museum**

Grytviken  
South Georgia  
via Falkland Islands, South Atlantic  
via UK SIQQ 1ZZ  
Tel: +870 382 359035  
Fax: +870 382 359 034  
Email: museum@sght.org

Alternatively contact via South Georgia  
Heritage Trust: [www.sght.org](http://www.sght.org)

### **Falkland Islands Shipping Agents**

Sullivan Shipping Services Ltd  
PO Box 159, Stanley  
Falkland Islands, South Atlantic via UK .  
FIQQ 1ZZ  
Tel: +500 22626 / 22627  
Fax: +500 22625  
Email: sullivan@horizon.co.fk

FIC Fleetwing Shipping Agency  
Crozier Place  
Stanley  
Falkland Islands, South Atlantic via UK.  
FIQQ 1ZZ  
Tel: +500 27630 / 27631  
Fax: +500 27603  
Email: fic.agency@horizon.co.fk

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## **Annex 4      Charts and Maps**

Admiralty Chart 3596 Approaches to South Georgia

Admiralty Chart 3597 South Georgia

Admiralty Chart 4213 South Georgia

Admiralty Chart 3582 (in production 2013)

Bay of Isles, Fortuna Bay, Prince Olav Harbour, Gold Harbour and Right Whale Bay

Admiralty Chart 3583 (in production 2013/14)

Larsen Harbour, Cooper Sound and Drygalski Fjord

Admiralty Chart 3585 Undine Harbour, Elsehul, Fortuna Bay

Larsen Harbour, Gold Harbour, Moltke Harbour, Right Whale Bay, Blue Whale Harbour, Cape Buller to Cape Constance, Rosita Harbour Prince Olav Harbour and approaches

Admiralty Chart 3586 King Haakon Bay, St Andrew's Bay, Ocean Harbour and Hound Bay

Electronic Nautical Charts (ENC's) GB53586A, GB53586B & GB53586C.

Admiralty Chart 3587 Leith Harbour, Stromness and Husvik in Stromness Bay

Jason Harbour, Maiviken, King Edward Cove, Grytviken  
Cobbler's Cove, Godthul

Admiralty Chart 3588 Approaches to Stromness and Cumberland Bays

Admiralty Chart 3589 (in production 2013/14)

Stewart Strait, Undine Harbour and Elsehul

Admiralty Chart 3592 Approaches to Stewart Strait, Stewart Strait and Willis Islands

Bird Sound, Bird Island and mainland South Georgia

Fishing Vessels are required to have charts 3587 and 3588 or equivalent electronic versions. All other vessels are strongly advised to carry them.

Directorate of Overseas Surveys D.O.S. 610 South Georgia 1:200 000

Directorate of Military Survey 1501 SN24-9 1-GSGS South Georgia

British Antarctic Survey. 2004. South Georgia, 1:200 000 scale map. BAS (Misc 12A and 12B). Cambridge

British Antarctic Survey. 2010. Thatcher Peninsula, 1:25 000 scale map (Series BAS 25, Sheets 4A & 4B) Cambridge

South Georgia Explorer 1:250 000 Visitors Map. Dist: NHBS, Totnes, UK

Note that the BAS 2004 map may be obtained from Stanfords in the UK  
( [www.stanfords.co.uk](http://www.stanfords.co.uk) )

Alternatively this map may be accessed and downloaded in a digital format from:  
[www.add.scar.org](http://www.add.scar.org)

**Annex 5**

**Visit Permit Holder Landing Declaration**

IMPORTANT LEGAL INFORMATION. Please read this in full before signing this form:

It is the responsibility of the Permit Holder (e.g. Expedition Leader or Yacht Master) to ensure that the following checks have been made and that all persons going ashore receive the following briefings prior to arriving in South Georgia:

1. Passenger landings are only permitted at the individual’s own risk. By alighting from any vessel the individual concerned accepts the potential for risk of injury or damage.
2. The Permit Holder confirms that all staff have reviewed, and will fully adhere to, all current permit conditions, codes of conduct and visitor management plans.
3. All visitors to Prion Island are required to remain on the boardwalk and adhere to the conditions of the visit permit and staff instruction at all times. Extreme care must be taken using the boardwalk or ashore at other landing sites. An individual must not proceed if deemed unsafe to do so by the Permit Holder or any of the ship’s staff.
4. It is an offence to enter the Whaling Station Prohibited Areas at Husvik, Leith, Stromness and Prince Olav harbours. All visitors must stay outside the boundaries of these areas at all times and adhere to the Prohibited Areas Ordinance.
5. It is the responsibility of the Permit Holder to ensure that all individuals are informed about potential dangers and risks, (including lack of search and rescue / medical evacuation capability) so as to enable the individual to assess and communicate any concerns they may reasonably have to the Permit Holder and/or the ship’s staff before landing.
6. The Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands will not accept any liability whatsoever for injury to, or damage sustained by, any individual, howsoever arising.

I have read and understood the above. I agree to be bound by its conditions and I have ensured that this information has been conveyed to all persons on board who may land on South Georgia.

If the first landing is not at King Edward Point, confirmation that this declaration has been signed must be communicated to the Government Officer at King Edward Point prior to any landing taking place.

Signed.....

Dated.....

Vessel.....

Operator..... (if applicable)

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## Annex 6

### Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands Approved Observer Coverage on private vessels and authorised commercial non-IAATO vessels

#### **GSGSSI Approved Observer carriage requirements**

Under the GSGSSI Tourism Management Policy visiting vessels may be required to carry an approved observer under the following conditions:

**1) Privately Owned Vessels** *(vessels not carrying fee-paying passengers or receiving contributions and benefits in kind from any non fee-paying passengers, guests or unpaid crew, which are in excess of an individual's pro rata contribution towards consumables for a voyage.)*

Privately owned vessels carrying 11- 20 persons on board (including professional crew) may be permitted to land passengers at approved landing sites, but may only land at Specially Protected sites when accompanied by a GSGSSI approved observer to oversee landings.

Privately owned vessels carrying more than 20 persons on board (including professional crew) will only be permitted to land passengers at sites other than Grytviken if accompanied by a GSGSSI approved observer to oversee landings.

**2) Commercial non-IAATO vessels** *(vessels carrying fee paying passengers which are not members of the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators.)*

Under exceptional circumstances, commercial non-IAATO vessels may be given permission to visit South Georgia, if the visit is of a unique nature in support of a specific project, which will not involve the vessel returning to South Georgia.

All such vessels will either be required to carry a GSGSSI approved observer for the duration of the visit or the visit will need to be overseen by one of the listed IAATO Yacht Services Providers or Operators, noting that this oversight must include observer coverage for the duration of the visit by a suitably experienced IAATO Expedition Leader.

## Terms of Reference for GSGSSI approved observers

- GSGSSI will employ all observers at a fixed daily rate of pay from the point of embarkation to their disembarkation. All travel costs will be covered by GSGSSI and then recovered from the owner / operator of the vessel.
- Whilst the owner / operator of a visiting vessel may secure the services of an observer (subject to the criteria for eligibility and approval by GSGSSI), that individual must be approved and employed by GSGSSI.
- All other associated costs will be met by GSGSSI and then recovered from the vessel operator.
- Observers will be required to sign a contract with GSGSSI and will be covered by GSGSSI's employer's liability insurance.
- Observers must ensure that vessel owners (or staff) have studied all relevant briefing information carefully and adhere to their conditions of permit including the rigorous implementation of biosecurity measures. Pre arrival briefings will need to be given.
- Observers must oversee and help to advise on all landings so as to ensure that they are conducted in accordance with GSGSSI permit conditions, in particular respecting all wildlife protection and biosecurity measures as well as safety issues.
- Any breaches of permit conditions must be reported to GSGSSI staff at the earliest opportunity.

The following persons are eligible to be considered as GSGSSI approved observers:

- i) Former IAATO Expedition Leaders with relevant experience.
- ii) Senior cruise ship or yacht expedition staff with relevant experience.
- iii) Individuals who can demonstrate to GSGSSI that they possess suitable experience for the oversight of visitor landings in accordance with GSGSSI visit permit conditions.

Persons who wish to be considered by GSGSSI for eligibility to be listed on the GSGSSI website as GSGSSI approved observers should contact the GSGSSI Executive Officer (exo@gov.gs)

## Annex 7

## Administration Fees & Charges

The administration fees as of 1 July 2013 are listed below. Charges for vessel visits are normally invoiced to the vessel operator through their shipping agent in Stanley (though alternative direct invoicing arrangements can be made on request). Yacht visitors may pay in pounds sterling - cash, cheque or travellers' cheques - or in equivalent United States dollars or Euros - cash or travellers' cheques - to the Government Officer at King Edward Point upon arrival at Cumberland East Bay, or to the GSGSSI by a shipping agent in Stanley. GSGSSI regrets that credit or debit cards cannot be accepted at King Edward Point (though this remains under review).

### CUSTOMS & HARBOUR FEES

#### 1. Fees for vessels (not including yachts.)

(Vessels, with a load line length greater than 24m.)

#### CUSTOMS FEES

**Customs Entry: £35**

**Customs Clearance: £35**

**Customs fees @ £25 per hour, minimum charge 2 hours: £50**

Customs fees are charged at a higher rate of £40 per hour outside normal working hours.

#### HARBOUR FEES (Cumberland East Bay)

These are calculated according to the net tonnage of the vessel and the number of passengers. Harbour Fees are charged on a daily basis for periods spent in Cumberland Bay, with the first 24 hours of any visit to the harbour being charged at the shown rate and subsequent 24-hour periods charged at half the rate.

Net Registered Tonnage			12 pax or fewer	More than 12 pax
Less than 100 tonnes			£220	£440
100	and under	800	£310	£620
800	and under	1 000	£390	£780
1 000	and under	1 500	£450	£900
1 500	and under	2 000	£550	£1,100
2 000	and under	5 000	£660	£1,320
5 000	and under	7 000	£820	£1,640
7 000	and under	10 000	£1,220	£2,440
10 000	and under	15 000	£1,490	£2,980
15 000	and under	20 000	£1,750	£3,500
20 000 and over			£1,840	£3,680

#### 2. Fees for Yachts

GSGSSI May 2013

Yachts are defined as small sailing or motor vessels, with a load line length of up to 24m, that are used for pleasure cruises.

<b>Harbour Fees</b>	<b>£50</b>	
<b>Customs Fees</b>	<b>£10</b>	(inclusive, covering entry, clearance and customs fees)

## **VISITOR FEES**

All visitors (over 16yrs), including those on yachts, but with the exception of professional (paid) staff and those persons listed in visitor management policy are charged a visitor fee. The duration of the visit determines the fee charged.

A visit commences with the undertaking of any activity as outlined in the Post Visit Report (e.g. small boat landing, extended walk, zodiac / small boat cruising, ship cruising) as well as any additional specialist activities.

For visitors staying up to 3 days (72 hours) there is a basic fee of £110. For visitors staying longer than 3 days (> 72 hours) there is an additional 50% charge to the basic fee, (this figure has been rounded down to the nearest £5.) This higher rate covers a visit of up to one calendar month (e.g. 20 November – 19 December.) Beyond one calendar month the visitor fee is applied again, as if for a new visit.

### **2013/14 Season visitor fee structure:**

**Visits of up to 72 hours:      £110**

**Visits more than 72 hours:    £165** (covering maximum duration of up to one calendar month.)

Visitor fees are reviewed every 2 years. The next review is due in July 2014.

Visit applicants will be required to indicate at the application stage whether a proposed visit will exceed 3 days (72 hours). If a visit has to extend for reasons of force majeure then additional fees will not be applied. If a vessel visit ends prematurely then the vessel operator can arrange a refund or credit with the GSGSSI.

For vessels carrying more than 12 passengers, 50% of projected visitor fees will need to be paid in advance of a visit. This will be invoiced at the application stage.

## **OTHER VESSEL CHARGES & ADMINISTRATIVE FEES**

**Water per tonne: £6**

**Transshipping Fees: £1,300**

Vessels wishing to tranship fish or fish products within the 200nm Maritime Zone may only do so in Cumberland East Bay. Arrangements for transhipments are made through the Government Officer at King Edward Point or the Director of South Georgia Fisheries in Stanley, who will issue a licence. The fee is charged for each transhipment operation between two vessels.

**Expedition Application and Assessment Fee: £1,000**

Visitors intending to spend nights ashore are classed as expeditions and require a separate expedition permit, which requires an assessment process. Expedition application information may be obtained directly from GSGSSI or the Government website ([www.sgisland.gs](http://www.sgisland.gs)). A fee covers the administrative costs of each application assessment process.

**Commercial filming: £200 per day**

A daily rate of £200 is charged to film production companies undertaking commercial film and photographic projects whilst on South Georgia or the South Sandwich Islands. All commercial film and photographic productions require permission from GSGSSI and applicants must undertake an environmental assessment prior to permission being granted.

**Marriages: £400**

This fee covers the preparation of marriage documentation and issuing of a Special Licence by the Commissioner. Couples intending to marry on South Georgia should contact the Office of the Commissioner as early as possible to allow adequate time for the preparation of the legal documentation.

**Science Permit: £100**

Fee per application (which may contain more than one project.)

**Penalty for late submission of visit application: £100**

For visit applications not submitted within 60 days of intended visit.

Note that this applies only to vessels carrying more than 10 persons on board.

The Commissioner reserves the right not to issue the permit.

*Note: All charges are subject to change. The charge to be levied is that in force at the time. Any changes will be notified in this booklet and in downloadable form on the Government website*

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**Prohibited Whaling Station Areas**

Under the Prohibited Areas Ordinance 2010, Prohibited Areas have been declared around the whaling stations at Husvik, Stromness, Leith, and Prince Olav Harbours.

This is necessary to protect persons from danger to their health and safety, and to protect the heritage of the areas.

It is an offence to enter these areas, as shown on the accompanying maps, without permission of the Commissioner, except for a person aboard any vessel to enter any area of sea due to stress of weather or by reason of Force Majeure.

The areas include the areas of sea, and the jetties shown on the plans (see over).

In particular note that the following areas are within the prohibited areas and access is not permitted:

- All jetties at all four stations
- Both cemeteries and the football pitch at Leith Harbour
- Stromness cemetery
- The coastal walk into Stromness from Husvik

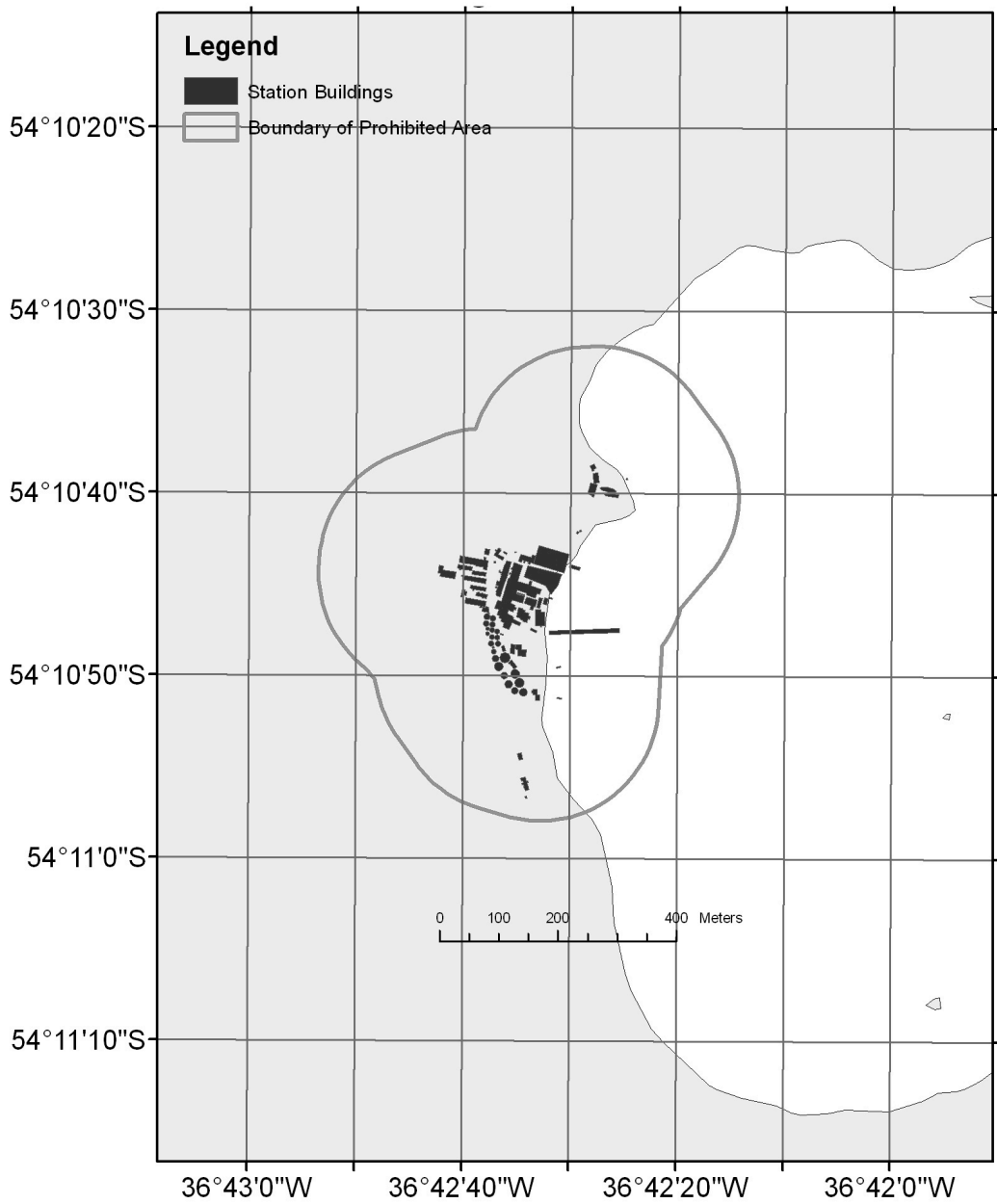
Boundaries are partially marked with signposts around the main approach routes . Visitors must ensure that they stay outside the areas marked on the plans.

Visitors should refer to the Prohibited Areas Ordinance 2010 and Prohibited Areas Order 2010. A copy of the Ordinance is available in South Georgia from the Government Officer at King Edward Point and may be downloaded from the GSGSSI website <http://www.gov.gs>

**The Manager's Villa at Husvik**

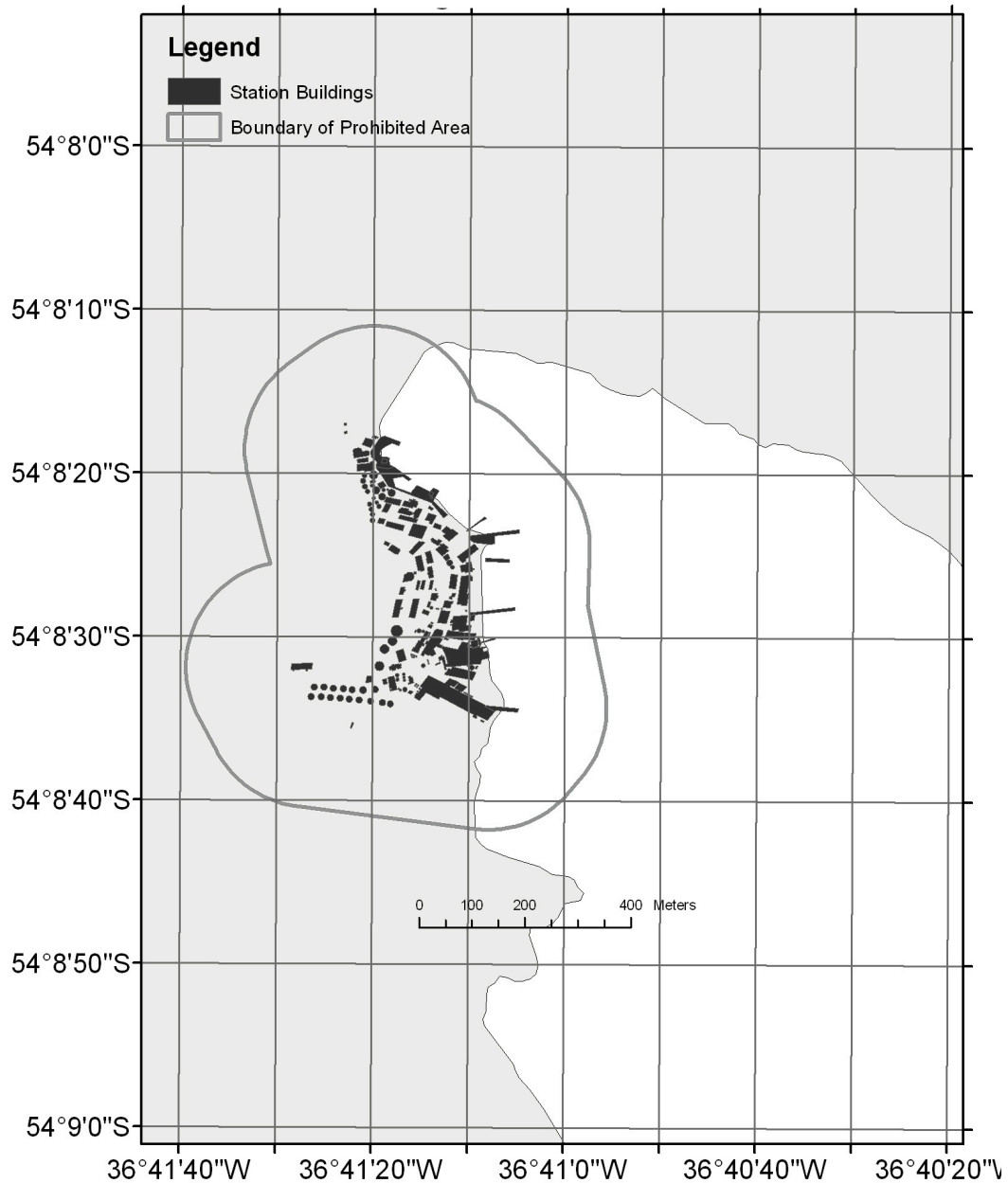
Following remedial works undertaken in 2012/13, access may, in exceptional cases, be granted to the Manager's Villa at Husvik. This is subject to permission from the Office of the Commissioner and strict adherence to access conditions.

# Husvik Whaling Station Prohibited Area

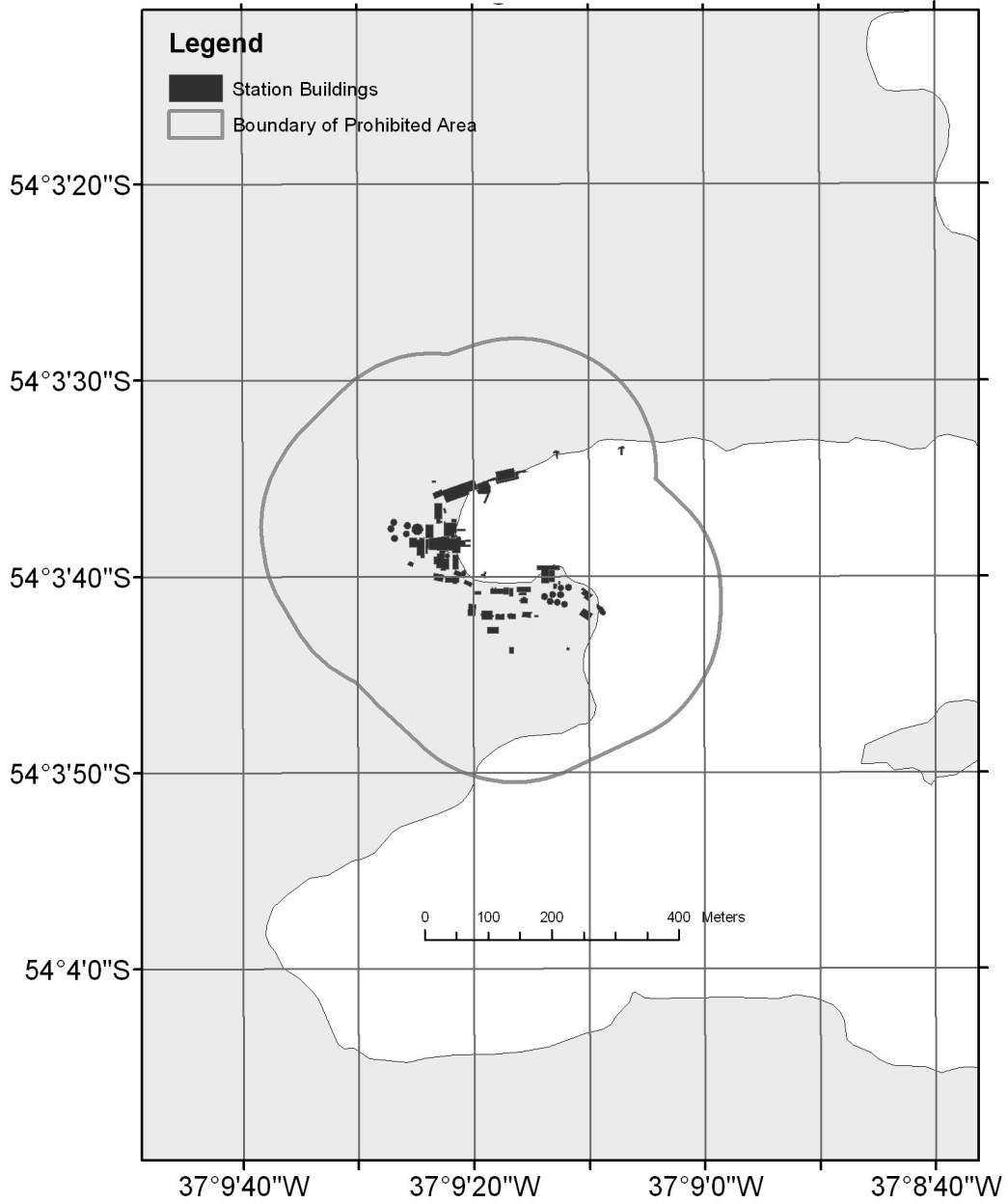




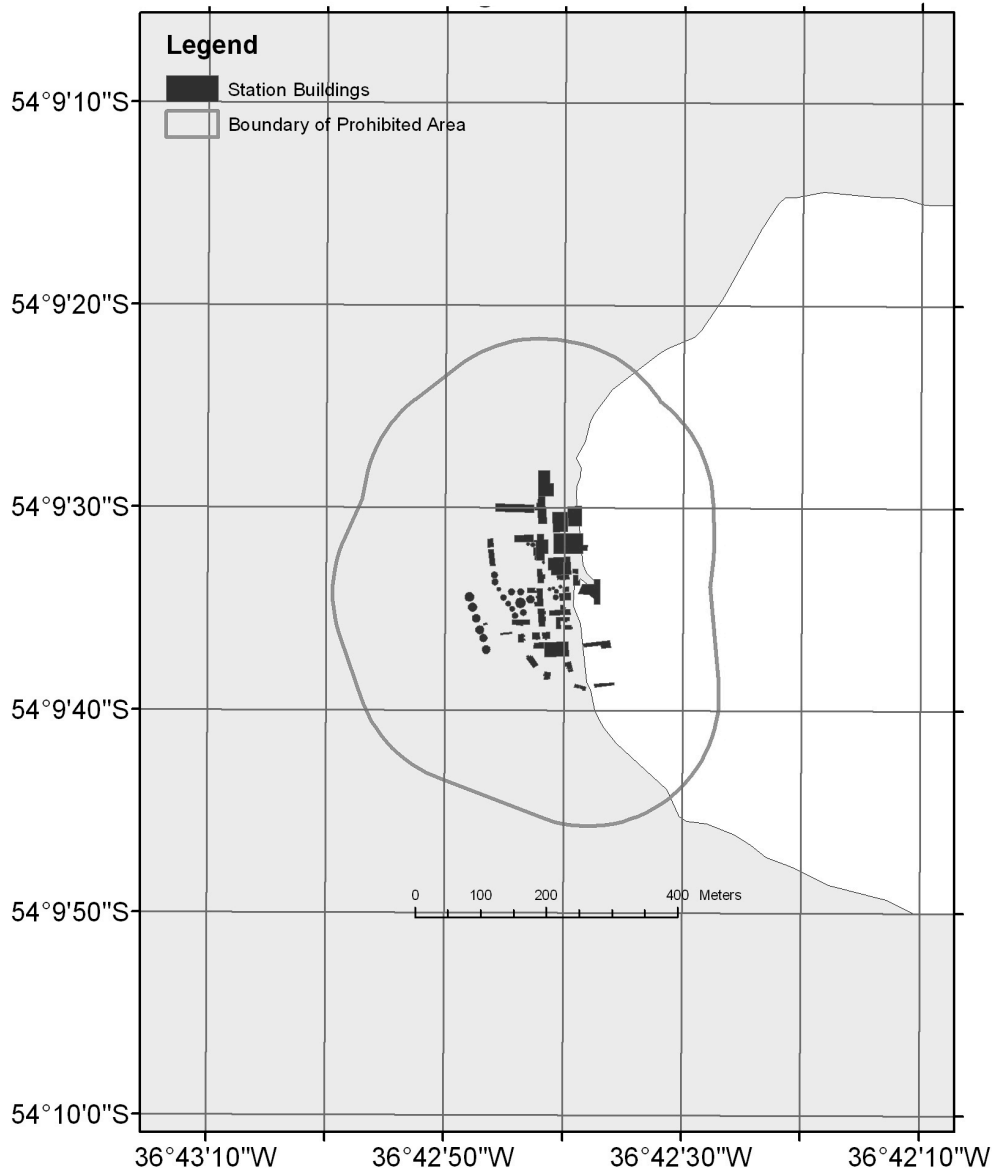
# Leith Whaling Station Prohibited Area



# Prince Olaf Whaling Station Prohibited Area



## Stromness Whaling Station Prohibited Area



At Stromness the northern boundary limit of the exclusion zone is less than 200m subject to the following conditions:

- (a) Visitors are only permitted to land at the demarcated northern boundary of the safety exclusion zone at the approved Stromness landing site in the absence of wind from the southwest (from the direction of the station buildings); and
- (b) The approved landing site is only to be used for landing and embarking and visitors must otherwise comply with the usual 200 metre exclusion zone.

All other landings must take place at the mouth of the stream (or further to the north of the approved site)

