



2022-23 CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL TOURIST VISITS TO MACQUARIE ISLAND

The Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service is calling for expressions of interest from Commercial Educational Tourist Operators seeking approval to visit the Macquarie Island Nature Reserve and World Heritage Area over the summer of 2022-2023.

Due to continuing uncertainties around COVID-19 risk management protocols on the island, it is possible that visits to the AAD Scientific Station and the Isthmus Tourism Management Area may not be permitted, and interaction with all island-based personnel may be restricted or prohibited. As a result, Shore Visit logistics and Tourist Visit conditions may be modified. Visit Organisers must be aware that even approved visits may be restricted or cancelled as part of the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic or any other infectious disease management response.

Commercial Educational Tourist Operators must provide the following information (by email or letter) **by CoB 1 September 2022**:

- Preferred visit dates;
- Vessel information;
- Proposed number of passengers per visit; and
- Responses to each of the selection criteria listed below.

Operators must **demonstrate their capacity** to deliver desirable outcomes against each of the following criteria:

1. Minimisation of environmental impacts both offshore and on land. (An independent environmental impact statement for all new operators will be required) (15%);
2. Adherence to strict safety guidelines, including the degree of self-reliance in such matters (15%);
3. Tangible benefits to the management and protection of Macquarie Island Nature Reserve (for instance assistance with transport of personnel and equipment, or with programs) (15%);
4. Benefits to the state of Tasmania (for instance employing Tasmanians or resupplying in Tasmania) (15%);
5. Clear communication to the company's clients, crew and staff of appropriate messages about the natural and cultural values of the Island, including the role that visitors play in protecting those values (10%);
6. Forms of tourist operator accreditation and relevant qualifications held by your company and your regular staff members (10%);
7. Flexibility of operating timetables (for instance if weather or Australian Antarctic Program shipping changes causes delays) (10%);
8. Past performance in this or related operations (10%).

All applicants should refer to the provisions of the current *Guidelines for Educational Tourist Visits to Macquarie Island Nature Reserve and World Heritage Area* before submitting their responses. Note that the guidelines are updated annually.

2022-23 Educational Tourist Visits Criteria for Macquarie Island

The following quotas for Educational Tourist Visits to the Reserve are expected to apply for the 2022-2023 season, however these may be reduced in response to COVID-19 risk management requirements and/or PWS operational constraints:

- Up to 18 ships, with up to 1,500 visitors in total, can enter the Reserve per financial year for the purpose of undertaking commercial Shore Visits;
- Out of the 18 commercial Shore Visits, only 12 visits may be made to the Australian Antarctic Division Scientific Station per financial year;
- Up to two Ships can enter the Reserve per financial year for the purpose of conducting Small Boat cruising only visits (no shore visits); and
- Up to two Yachts can enter the Reserve per financial year for the purpose of undertaking Shore Visits.

In the event of demand for places exceeding any of the quotas, a Parks and Wildlife Service assessment group will rank applications based on the weighted visit selection criteria listed above and visit offers will be made according to those rankings. Prospective operators should be aware that they may not be allocated any or all visits applied for, and that they may have to change their proposed visit dates in order to avoid date clashes with other visits or for other operational reasons.

Foreign companies wishing to conduct tours to Macquarie Island must provide a Certificate of Registration of a Foreign Company as per the *Corporations Act 2001 (Commonwealth)* before a Business Licence for visits can be issued under the *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002*. Under Part 5B.2 of the *Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)*, a foreign company may only carry on a business in Australia if it is registered or has an application pending.

Please note: As the State Government agency charged with the care and management of Macquarie Island as a Nature Reserve and World Heritage Area, the Parks and Wildlife Service works at minimising further human impacts on the Island, while facilitating appropriate commercial educational tourism opportunities.

Expressions of Interest should be sent to:

Rowena Hannaford
A/Macquarie Island Executive Officer
Parks and Wildlife Service, Tasmania
Phone: +61 3 61654051; E-mail: Rowena.Hannaford@parks.tas.gov.au
Post: Parks & Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 126, Moonah, Tasmania, Australia 7009