

Government of South Georgia  
& the South Sandwich Islands



Annual Visitor Report

July 2018 to June 2019

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## Annual Visitor Report July 2018 to June 2019

### Summary

This report covers the period from July 2018 to June 2019. We saw a record number of passengers with a total of 10,337 (10109 in 17/18) cruise ship passengers arriving on 78 cruise ships (last year 82). Three visits were cancelled; one by *Akademik Ioffe* and one by *Le Soleal* and yacht *Libertaire* was cancelled while on route to South Georgia.

Over this season a total of 18,094 (last year 17,873) individuals visited South Georgia, this figure includes cruise ship passengers, crew and expedition staff and yacht visitors.

### Part 1: Cruise Ships

A total of 30 (28 in 17/18) different cruise ships made 78 (82 in 17/18) separate visits.

Season	Voyages	Passengers	Staff	Crew	Others	Total
2011/12	51	5,831 (58.4%)	578 (5.8%)	3,569 (35.7%)	6 (0.1%)	9,984
2012/13	51	5,792 (58.0%)	612 (6.1%)	3,552 (35.6%)	24 (0.2%)	9,980
2013/14	55	7,024 (59.6%)	667 (5.7%)	4,080 (34.6%)	21 (0.2%)	11,792
2014/15	65	8,142 (58.9%)	827 (6.0%)	4,837 (35.0%)	23 (0.2%)	13,829
2015/16	68	8,787 (57.6%)	915 (6.0%)	5,549 (36.4%)	13 (0.1%)	15,264
2016/17	68	8,946 (58.5%)	890 (5.9%)	5,459 (36%)	11 (0.1%)	15,303
2017/18	82	10,109 (57%)	1,089 (6.1%)	6,498 (36.3%)	24 (0.1%)	17,720
2018/19	78	10,337 (57.4%)	1,110 (6.2%)	6,550 (36.3%)	21 (0.1%)	18,018

Table 1. Summary of cruise ship visitor numbers

### Cruise Ship Voyage and Passenger Number Trends

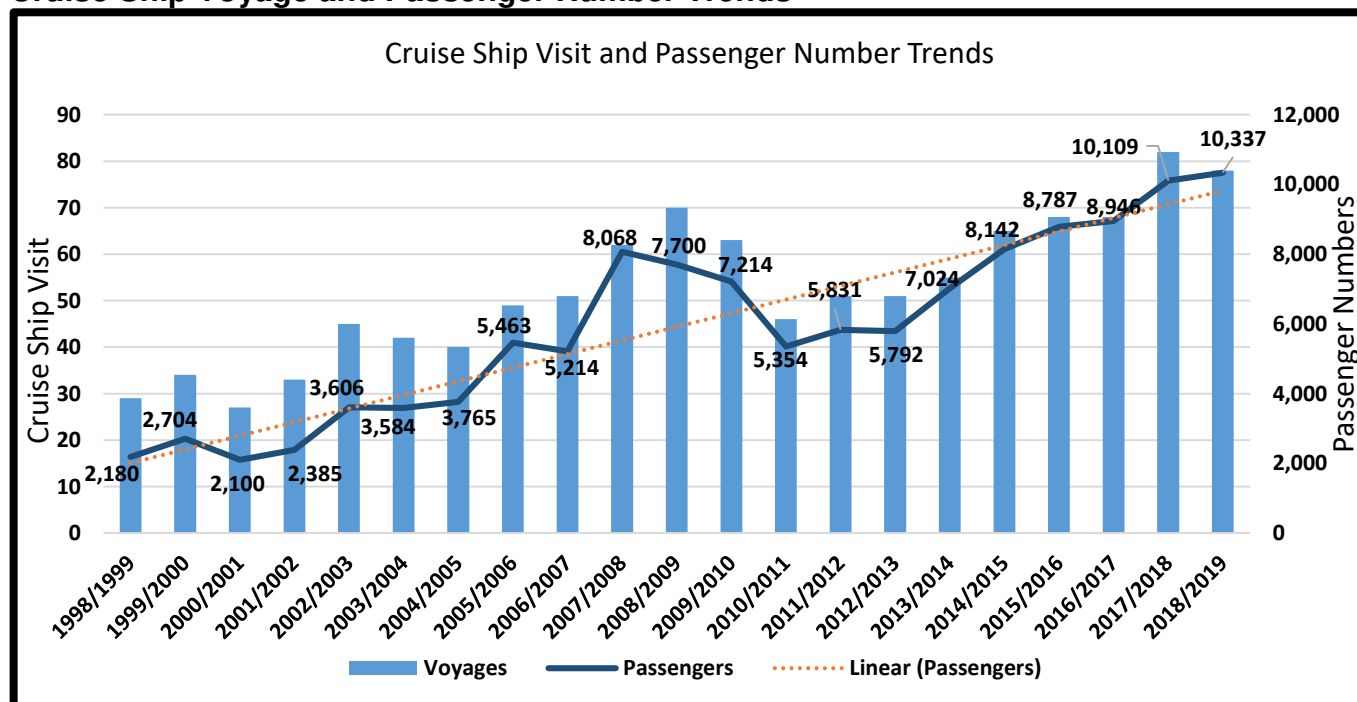


Figure 1: Cruise Ship Visits and Passenger Number Trends

## Passenger Numbers and Cruise Ship Visits

*Le Lyrial* carried the most passengers over the season.

*Prinsendam* was the largest passenger carrying ship with 623 passengers, only visiting Grytviken.

*Polar Pioneer* made the most visits with 6. All other ships visited between 1 and 5 times.

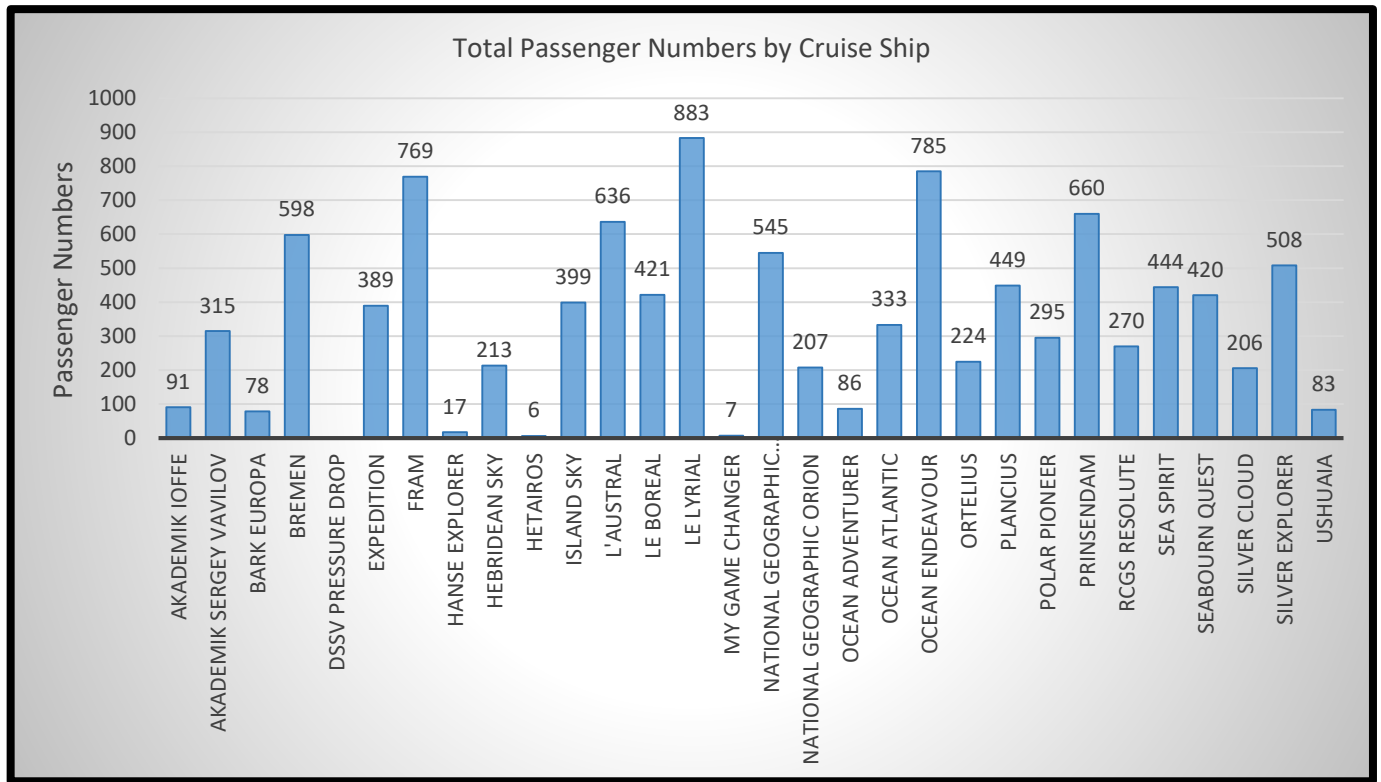


Figure 2: Total Passenger Numbers by Cruise Ship

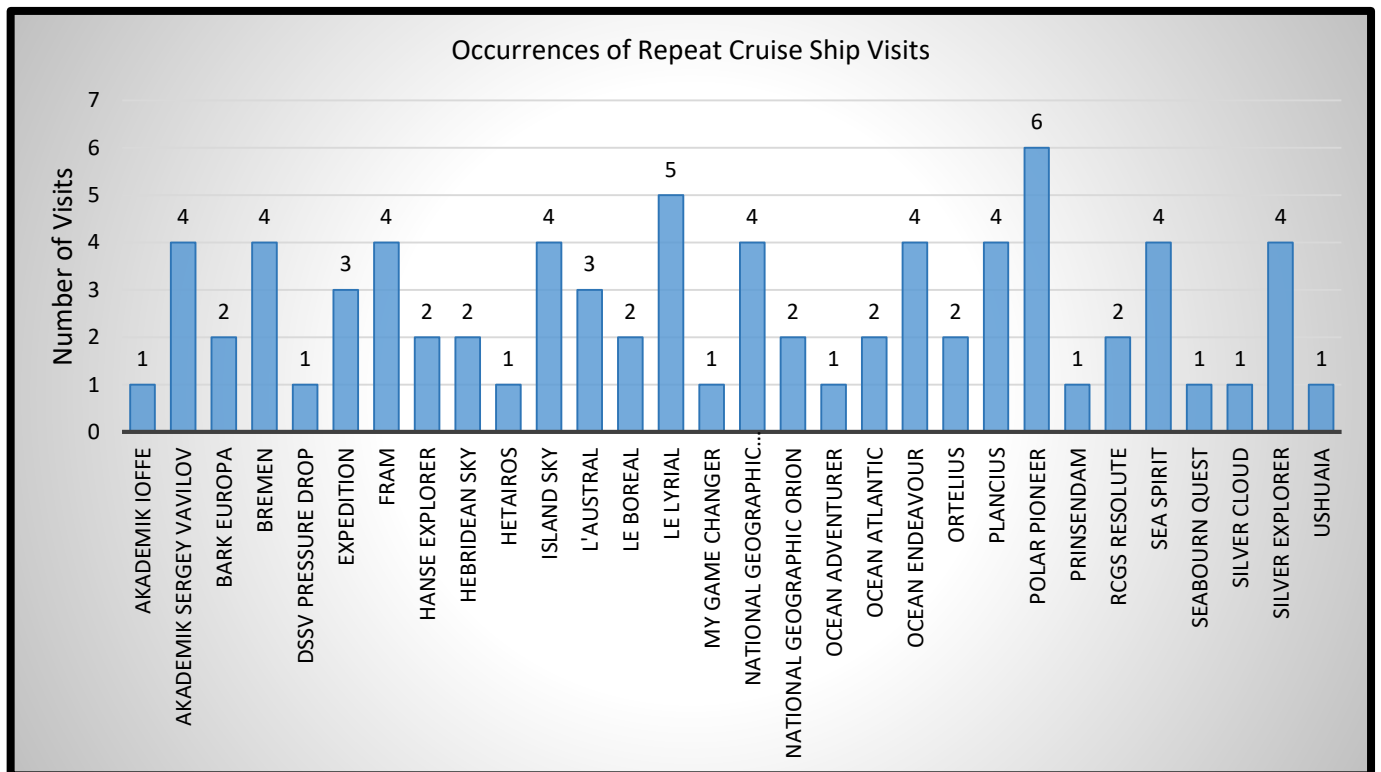


Figure 3: Occurrences of Repeat Cruise Ship Visits

### Passenger numbers on visiting vessels

76% of passengers came on ships that held between 50 and 200 passengers. Ships with passenger numbers in excess of 200 accounted for 23%.

Ship Passenger Numbers	Number of Ship Visits	Total number of Passengers	Comments
< 50	7	108	<i>MY Hanse Explorer, Bark Europa, DSSV Pressure Drop<sup>1</sup>, Hanse Explorer, Hetairos, MY Game Changer</i>
50 - 100	13	870	
101 - 150	23	2,626	
151 - 200	27	4,390	
201-300	6	1,263	
301-400	0	0	
>401	2	1,080	<i>Seabourn Quest, Prinsendam</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>10,337</b>	

Table 2. Passenger number on visiting vessel

### Vessel Changes

There were no new vessels this season but *RCGS Resolute* (ex *Hanseatic*) is now under the management of One Ocean Expeditions. A Government observer spent 24 hours on board observing staff work practices and making landing site observations.

### Passenger Demographics

The passengers represented 66 different nationalities. The top ten nationalities represent 90.2% of the overall passenger numbers. When compared to 2017-2018 the same dominant 5 nationalities have maintained their percentage share at 72%.

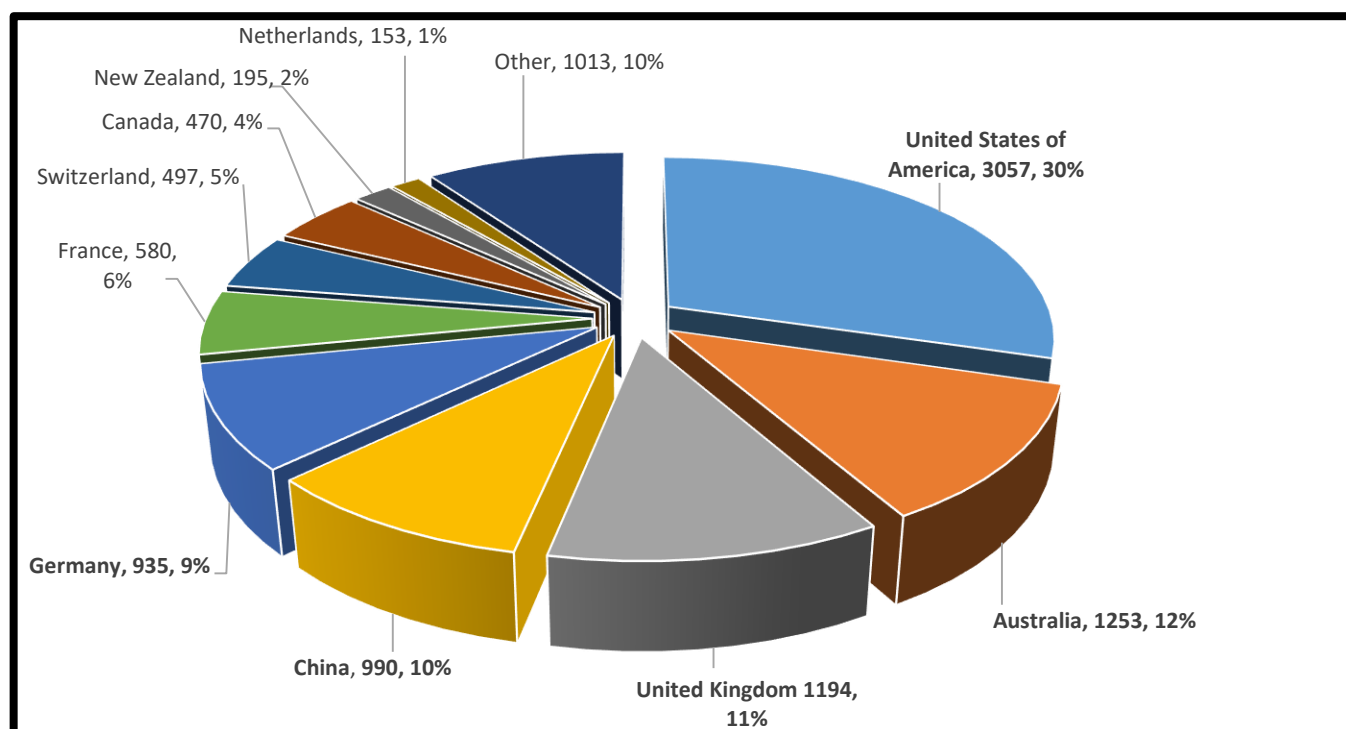


Figure 4: Cruise Ship Passenger Demographics

<sup>1</sup> Super Yacht recorded a Cruise Ship

Country	2018-2019	2017-2018
United States of America	3057	2679
Australia	1253	1124
United Kingdom	1194	1128
China	990	878
Germany	935	1472
Sub Total	7426	7281
All Others	2908	2828
TOTAL (Table 1)	10337	10109
% share of top 5	<b>72%</b>	<b>72%</b>

Table 3: Trend Analysis on Passenger Demographics

### Expedition Staff

There was a total of 1,110 expedition staff (1,089 in 17/18) from a total of 44 countries (46 in 17/18) with an overall ratio of approximately one staff member to each ten passengers. The demographic breakdown was similar to last year. Over 60% of staff came from 5 countries:

USA	197 staff (18%)	Germany	105 staff (10%)
Canada	191 staff (17%)	Australia	72 staff (6%)
UK	149 staff (13%)		

### Expedition Leader Briefings

18 new ELs were briefed at KEP (10 in 17/18).

### Cruise ship Crew

6,550 members of crew came from 80 different nationalities. Over 50% came from the Philippines.

### Last Cruise ship port prior to arrival in South Georgia

Falkland Islands	60 (65 in 17/18)	Montevideo	3
Antarctic <sup>2</sup>	9	Punta del Este	1
Ushuaia	4	Isla de Hornos	1

### First Cruise ship port after leaving South Georgia

Antarctic <sup>3</sup>	51	Montevideo	1
Falkland Islands	18	Punta del Este	1
Tristan da Cunha	3	Cape Town	1
Ushuaia	3		

### Activities Undertaken

A total of 54 different sites (last year 49) were visited by cruise ships. The activities undertaken in popular order were small boat landings, extended walks, kayaking and scuba diving. Boat landings by Zodiac recorded the highest activity number with 46,474 passengers landing by small boat.

This number rises to 54,209 (57,952 in 17/18) when crew, staff and others are included.

<sup>2</sup> Antarctic Peninsula or associated Islands

<sup>3</sup> Antarctic Peninsula or associated Islands

Activity	Number of sites activity carried out		Passengers carrying out activity		Number of times activity carried out at all sites	
Boat Landing	34	(31)	46,474	(49,491)	457	(514)
Extended Walk	24	(19)	4,522	(6,840)	78	(116)
Kayaking	23	(22)	867	(1,090)	86	(101)
Scuba diving	10	(16)	343	(180)	14	(27)

Table 4: Activities undertaken by cruise ship passengers (Brackets show 17/18 season)

### Small Boat Landings

This is a proxy for the number of passengers coming ashore at each site each year. The top 10 sites account for 88% (40962) of all landings. The 17/18 season is available for comparison.

	Visitor Site	2018/19		2017/18	
		Passengers	Visits	Passengers	Visits
1	Grytviken	10,032	(81)	9,634	(80)
2	Salisbury Plain	6,195	(51)	7,020	(64)
3	St Andrews Bay	5,550	(48)	6,043	(64)
4	Gold Harbour	5,013	(52)	5,844	(52)
5	Stromness	3,938	(39)	5,514	(56)
6	Fortuna Bay – Whistle Cove	3,937	(32)	3,691	(33)
7	Prion Island	2,985	(31)	3,358	(41)
8	Godthul	1,285	(17)	1,417	(23)
9	Moltke Harbour	1064	(10)	-	
10	Right Whale Bay	963	(10)	852	(10)
11	Jason Harbour	873	(13)	1,087	(14)
12	Fortuna Bay (Anchorage Bay)	834	(11)	876	(9)

Table 5: Summary of the most popular small boat landing sites.

### Extended Walks

Extended Walks took place on 78 occasions (116 in 17/18) at 22 sites (19 in 17/18). The most popular extended walk this season was the Stromness Walk with 1054 passenger, staff and crew taking part.

Site	Number of Visits	Number of Passengers	Numbers including crew, staff & others
Stromness	11	907	1054
Grytviken	11	757	910
Shackleton Walk	15	717	840
Fortuna Bay (Whistle Cove)	4	424	496
St Andrews Bay	5	362	442
Salisbury Plain	3	246	277
Rookery Point Walk	4	210	230
Godthul Walk	4	146	162
Fortuna Bay (Anchorage Bay)	3	134	158
Rosita Harbour	1	128	143
Maiviken	1	116	133
Right Whale Bay	2	95	107
Jason Harbour	2	75	83
Cape Rosa	1	37	49
Peggotty Bluff	1	36	42
Ocean Harbour	1	33	46

Moltke Harbour	1	22	26
Leith Harbour Walk	1	18	24
Gold Harbour	1	15	19
Ocean Harbour	1	15	19
Royal Bay Kings	1	15	17
Gold Harbour Walk	1	14	18

Table 6: Extended Walk Information

The Shackleton Walk was less popular this season with only 15 separate visits (36 in 17/18) with a total of 717 passengers (7% of total passenger numbers) taking part (1,505 in the previous season). Weather and terrain conditions early in the season may have been a contributing factor.

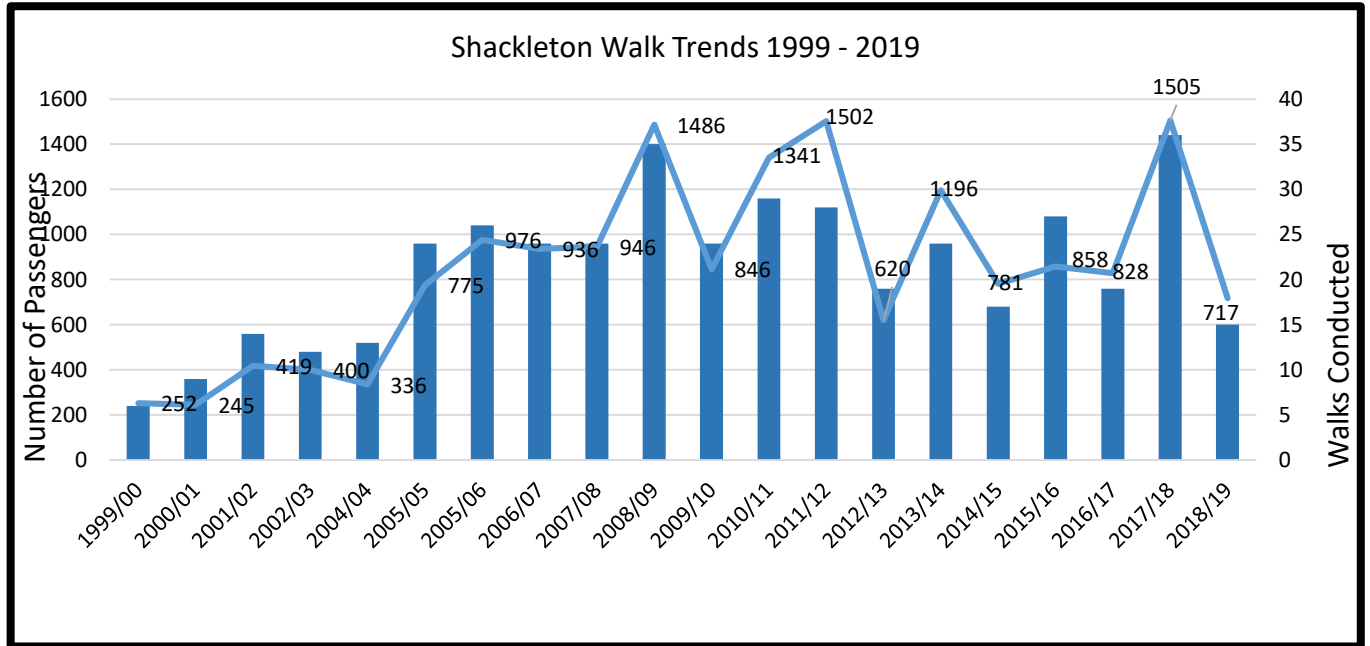


Figure 5: Shackleton Walk Trend

### Kayaking

The most popular kayaking sites were Gold Harbour (156 passengers), Grytviken (105 passengers kayaking) and Cooper Bay Macaronis (82 passengers kayaking).

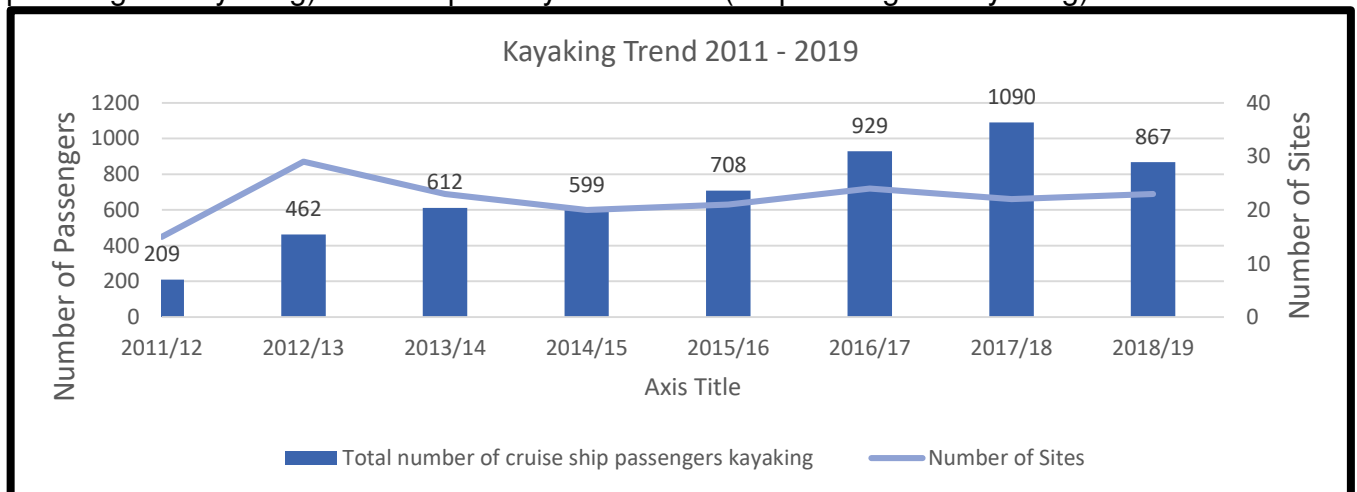


Figure 6: Kayaking Trend



**Scuba Diving**

343 cruise ship passengers took part in scuba diving.

**Landing Sites of Particular Interest – Prion Island**

The number of passengers and visits to Prion island has fluctuated since the Boardwalk was erected. However, as a proportion of overall passenger numbers to South Georgia the number of visitors has decreased from 39% (2011/12) to 29% (2018/19). The total number of small boat landings this season fell to 31 (41 last season), while the total number of passengers fell from 3,358 last season to 2,985. When including staff and crew this rises to 3,392 (3,839 in 2017/18).

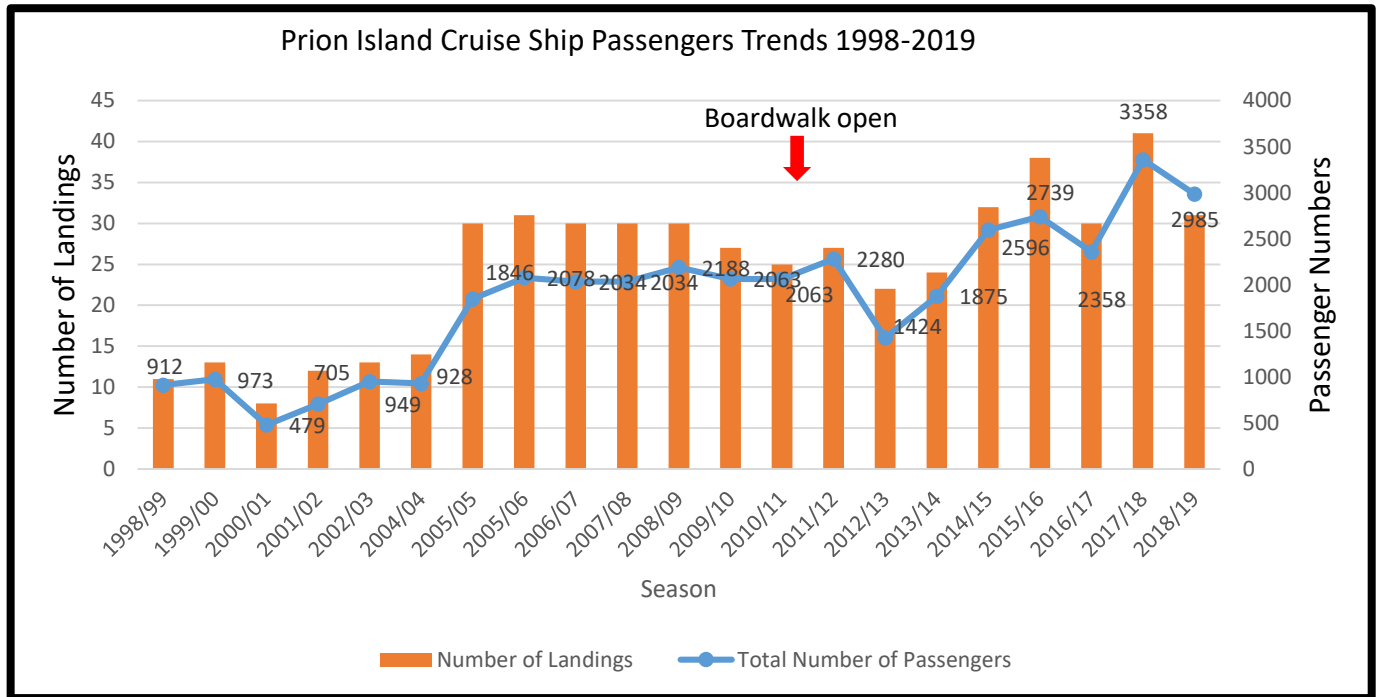


Figure 7: Prion Island Visitor Numbers

**Landing Sites of Particular Interest – Grytviken**

All vessels are required to visit Cumberland Bay East to make customs declarations and complete the biosecurity audit. We welcomed *Ushuaia* as the first cruise ship of the season on 25 October 2018 with 83 passengers. The last ship was *Polar Pioneer* on 31 March 2019 with 46 passengers.

**Grytviken Church**

The church at Grytviken was used on 5 separate occasions for organised events which included a wedding, Christmas carol services and concerts.

**Post Office**

The Post Office was taken on board 2 cruise ships this season (2 last season). The ‘Enduring Eye’ Hurley Exhibition which includes original lantern slides on loan from the Royal Geographical Society remained open for another season in the Grytviken Post Office display room.

All Vessel Matters

**Post Visit Reporting**

It is mandatory for each vessel to complete a post visit report. One vessel was excused from completing this report in 2018/19.

## Medical Assistance

No medical facilities are available on South Georgia for visitors. However, there were 2 records of requests for medical assistance from cruise ships.

No Fur Seal incidents were reported. One passenger was bitten by a bull Elephant Seal resulting in the ship cancelling its visit and seeking medical assistance in the Falkland Islands.

## Cruise Ship Bird Strikes

It is mandatory for every vessel to provide details of bird strikes/bird collision with their ship. There were 271 recorded incidences of bird strikes this season (last season 212) of which 12 were reported dead.

The comments received are summarised here.

Date Strike Detected	Location	Birds Alive	Birds Dead	Comments
11/11/2018	Cumberland Bay Gold Harbour	21	1	Snow Strong Winds
13/11/2018	Gold Harbour	0	1	Strong Winds
28/11/2018	Cooper Bay	3	0	Fog
06/02/2019	Cumberland Bay	0	1	Fog
07/02/2019	Gold Harbour	3	1	Fog
24/02/2019	Drygalski Fjord	1	3	Rain
27/02/2019	-	38	1	Transiting at Night
27/02/2019	Cumberland Bay	30	0	Rain and Fog
28/02/2019	Antarctic Bay	37	0	Snow
28/02/2019	North West	5	0	Rain
01/03/2019	Bay of Isles	16	0	Clear – at night
07/03/2019	Cumberland Bay	2	0	Rain
09/03/2019	Bay of Isles	7	0	Clear
10/03/2019	St Andrews Bay	4	2	Clear
11/03/2019	Gold Harbour	92	2	Snow
<b>Total</b>		<b>259</b>	<b>12</b>	

Table 7: Incidental Bird Strike

## Biosecurity Audit

2018/19 saw the introduction of a new biosecurity audit aimed at driving improvements in the veracity of biosecurity measures maintained on each vessel. A pre-determined level of audits is selected based on passenger numbers. This meant 3600 bio-security checks were undertaken on passengers at King Edward Point of which 8% had some kind of biosecurity failure. The new system resulted in a 30% reduction in biosecurity checks by GO's from last year's total of 5500. The failures were the same as previous years and included mud, plant material and guano on the soles of boots, seeds or grass stuck to fasteners. Information on what vessels could do to improve measures was shared with the vessel.

## Part 2: Yachts

A total of 10<sup>4</sup> yacht visited on 9 different yachts with 80 persons aboard (118 in 17/18). One yacht visit by '*Libertaire*' was cancelled.

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<sup>4</sup> Yacht Paradise visited with 4 passengers and 4 crew. No PVR was requested.

Yacht	Operator		Arrival Date	No. of Visits	Passe- ngers	Crew	Staff	Other	Total
Golden Fleece	Jerome Poncet		20/02/19	1		3			3
Hans Hansson	Quixote Expeditions		28/02/19	1	6	6	1	4	17
Podorange	Voile Australe		13/10/18	1	7	3	2	0	12
Pelagic	Pelagic Expeditions Ltd		09/01/19	1	3	3	0	0	6
Pelagic Australis	Pelagic Expeditions	Mountaineering and Support	15/09/18	1	7	3	2	0	12
Pelagic Australis	Pelagic Expeditions	Shackleton Traverse	25/10/18	1	8	3	0	0	11
Sir Ernst	Private		16/01/19	1	0	6	0	0	6
Santa-Maria Australis	Turismo SIM Ltd	Media Permit	28/09/18	1	2	3	0	0	5
Sarah Vorwerk	Henk Boersma		10/11/18	1	0	4	0	0	4
<b>Total</b>				<b>9</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>76</b>

Table 8: Yacht Visits

**Yacht Landing Sites.** Yachts conducted beach landings at a total of 35 different sites during this season (76 last season) landing in total 674 persons ashore.

### Part 3: Expeditions

There were 4 expeditions this season (2 on the same trip). They are highlighted in yellow above.

### Part 4: Other Vessel Visits

Vessel Name	Organisation	Dates	Comments
HMS <i>Clyde</i>	UK Military - Royal Navy	02 Nov to 04 Nov 2018	South Atlantic Patrol
RRS <i>Ernest Shackleton</i>	British Antarctic Survey	17 Nov to 18 Nov 2018	Cargo and Passengers
RRS <i>Ernest Shackleton</i>	British Antarctic Survey	20 Nov to 22 Nov 2018	Cargo
RRS <i>Discovery</i>	NERC Research Vessel	14 Jan to 23 Jan 2019	Deliver medical oxygen
RRS <i>James Clark Ross</i>	British Antarctic Survey	16 Jan 2019	Medivac from KEP
RRS <i>James Clark Ross</i>	British Antarctic Survey	23 Jan 2019	Return medical supplies and oxygen
<i>Kronprins Haakon</i>	Norwegian Research Vessel	07 Feb 2019	Visit
RRS <i>Discovery</i>	NERC Research Vessel	21 Feb 2019	Cargo
RRS <i>Ernest Shackleton</i>	British Antarctic Survey	27 Feb to 28 Feb 2019	Cargo
<i>Agulhas II</i>	South African Research Vessel	05 Mar 2019	Visit, deliver weather buoys
HMS <i>Clyde</i>	UK Military - Royal Navy	07 Mar to 11 Mar 2019	South Atlantic Patrol
RRS <i>Ernest Shackleton</i>	British Antarctic Survey	08 Mar 2019	Cargo

Table 9: Other visiting vessels

## Annex 1 – Total Cruise Ship Passenger, Crew and Staff Nationality

Country	Passengers	Staff	Crew	Other	Total
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10337</b>	<b>1110</b>	<b>6550</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18018</b>
USA	3057	197	27	7	3288
Australia	1253	72	4	1	1330
United Kingdom	1194	149	105	9	1457
China	990	19	37	0	1046
Germany	935	105	142	1	1183
France	580	58	467	0	1105
Switzerland	497	17	8	0	522
Canada	470	191	18	3	682
New Zealand	195	42	9	0	246
Netherlands	153	34	51	0	238
Taiwan	118	5	0	0	123
Israel	98	0	0	0	98
Belgium	84	5	17	0	106
South Africa	78	24	54	0	156
Austria	74	2	32	0	108
Norway	59	22	31	0	112
Sweden	50	15	23	0	88
Spain	46	11	12	0	69
Singapore	43	2	0	0	45
Italy	39	7	55	0	101
Ireland	29	12	9	0	50
Russia	23	16	388	0	427
Argentina	22	43	28	0	93
India	22	0	112	0	134
Denmark	20	8	3	0	31
Thailand	17	0	15	0	32
Mexico	16	2	9	0	27
United States Outlying Islands	14	0	1	0	15
Poland	12	1	18	0	31
Japan	11	0	0	0	11
Luxembourg	11	1	1	0	13
Philippines	11	8	3301	0	3320
Brazil	9	1	30	0	40
Chile	9	8	23	0	40
Czech Republic	9	2	3	0	14
Lithuania	9	0	5	0	14
Portugal	9	1	11	0	21
Bulgaria	7	0	39	0	46
Malaysia	7	0	2	0	9
Romania	7	0	168	0	175
Indonesia	4	3	375	0	382
Kazakhstan	4	0	0	0	4

(Continued) Country	Passengers	Staff	Crew	Other	Total
Colombia	3	0	9	0	12
Finland	3	2	12	0	17
Lichtenstein	3	0	0	0	3
Panama	3	0	20	0	23
Slovakia	3	4	2	0	9
South Korea	3	0	1	0	4
Estonia	2	0	5	0	7
Fiji	2	0	0	0	2
Greece	2	0	27	0	29
Iceland	2	3	0	0	5
Malta	2	1	0	0	3
Peru	2	6	184	0	192
Andorra	1	0	1	0	2
Croatia	1	0	29	0	30
Ecuador	1	2	6	0	9
Hungary	1	1	19	0	21
Kuwait	1	0	0	0	1
Namibia	1	0	0	0	1
Serbia	1	1	28	0	30
Trinidad and Tobago	1	0	1	0	2
Tunisia	1	0	0	0	1
Turkey	1	0	5	0	6
Ukraine	1	0	277	0	278
Uruguay	1	1	2	0	4
Albania	0	0	1	0	1
Barbados	0	0	3	0	3
Belarus	0	0	2	0	2
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	6	0	6
Costa Rica	0	2	8	0	10
Dominican Republic	0	0	1	0	1
Egypt	0	0	2	0	2
El Salvador	0	0	12	0	12
Georgia	0	0	2	0	2
Guatemala	0	2	41	0	43
Guyana	0	0	12	0	12
Honduras	0	0	44	0	44
Jamaica	0	0	18	0	18
Kenya	0	0	3	0	3
Kyrgyzstan	0	0	13	0	13
Latvia	0	0	7	0	7
Macedonia	0	0	8	0	8
Mauritania	0	0	1	0	1
Mauritius	0	0	29	0	29
Montenegro	0	0	2	0	2

(Continued) Country	Passengers	Staff	Crew	Other	Total
Nicaragua	0	0	54	0	54
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0	0	1	0	1
Slovenia	0	2	2	0	4
Sri Lanka	0	0	7	0	7
Venezuela	0	0	3	0	3
Zimbabwe	0	0	7	0	7
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10337</b>	<b>1110</b>	<b>6550</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18018</b>

#### Annex 2 – Yacht Passenger Demographics<sup>5</sup>

Country	Passengers	Staff	Crew	Other	Total
United Kingdom	13	2	8	3	26
France	7	2	11	0	20
USA	6	1	4	1	12
New Zealand	4	0	0	0	4
Australia	1	0	0	0	1
Canada	1	0	0	0	1
Switzerland	1	0	0	0	1
Argentina	0	0	2	0	2
Austria	0	0	1	0	1
Germany	0	0	3	0	3
Ireland	0	0	1	0	1
Netherlands	0	0	2	0	2
South Africa	0	0	1	0	1
Uruguay	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>76</b>

<sup>5</sup> This does not include 8 persons from yacht Paradise