



Press release from the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators and Kings Bay (for immediate release):

New guidelines for visiting the world's most northerly community: Ny-Ålesund

New community specific guidelines have been developed for Ny-Ålesund, the world's most northerly community, in response to increasing visitor numbers. These guidelines created by Kings Bay, which facilitates the international research activities that take place in high Arctic settlement. Ny-Ålesund joins the ranks of Longyearbyen (Svalbard), Seyðisfjörður (Iceland) and Sisimiut (Greenland), three Arctic communities that have also created community specific guidelines using a template developed by the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO).

Ny-Ålesund is a peaceful place, the majority of its residents made up of seasonal international scientific researchers and workers. However, when a cruise ship comes into town the population can expand enormously, albeit temporarily. This might cause some challenges for the remote community, but Kings Bay knows that information and communication are key to tackling any challenge that might occur. Per Erik Hanevold, the director of Kings Bay highlights this issue:

"We hope and think that the new community guidelines for Ny-Ålesund will increase all visitors' awareness of the uniqueness of this community, as well as the restrictions and rules that are in place. We welcome visitors, and encourage them to explore what the town has to offer," says Hanevold.

The guidelines have been developed to help cruise ship operators convey important information to their passengers, and make it clear why special measures must be taken when visiting the town to avoid disturbance. The settlement is a unique international research station, with many researchers from all over the world residing there during the summer season. The research and environmental monitoring that takes place in Ny-Ålesund requires special considerations. The sensitive instruments can easily be disturbed by radio emitting devices such as mobile phones, resulting in inaccurate data. Local guidelines have been created to avoid interfering with natural science research. This includes restrictions when it comes to walking on fragile tundra or disturbing wildlife.

AECO sees the guidelines as an opportunity to ensure better information flow between communities and cruise operators and mutually beneficial visits.

"Ny-Ålesund is a hugely interesting research site that also has played an important role in the modern history of Svalbard. The significance of the research that is carried out here leads to the environment being very sensitive. The best way to ensure that Ny-Ålesund stays accessible to cruise ship visitors is by adhering to guidelines that minimize the overall impact of visits," says Frigg Jørgensen, executive director of AECO.

Suggested illustration photo



Photo caption: Ny-Ålesund, a popular stop for cruise ships. Photo: Arctic Daily, Matilde Robert

High resolution illustration image can be downloaded here:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/258rvxag3vwxgbr/AADW1OyCD3keWql7vV4UyW_ka?dl=0

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AECO - Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators

Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators is an international organization for expedition cruise operators and associates in the Arctic, dedicated to managing environmentally friendly, safe and considerate cruise tourism. With close to 70 international members – including 40 vessel operators, owners and management, and 50 expedition cruise vessels that are organized by the association – AECO represent the great majority of these operations in the Arctic.

Website: www.aeco.no.

Kings Bay AS

Ny-Ålesund is a centre for international arctic scientific research and environmental monitoring. Kings Bay AS' vision is to support "the best interests of Arctic research and environmental monitoring" and the company's main task is to be a facilitator for Ny-Ålesund.

Kings Bay's role as a facilitator is primarily as the supplier of infrastructure services, but the company also offer other services that contribute to greater research coordination and collaboration. Kings Bay plays a central role in ensuring good information flow between actors in Ny-Ålesund and in relation to the world at large. Kings Bay also builds networks to expand and maintain contact with similar Arctic research stations and research communities.

Website: www.kingsbay.no