

REPORT

AECO'S ANIMATED VISITORS' GUIDELINES

Allocations from Svalbard Environmental Protection Fund in the fall of 2007 included funding of *AECO's Guidelines for Visitors to the Arctic*.

The visitors guidelines has since then been one of AECO's most important tool in educating cruise guests in considerate behavior, not at least in regards to environmental considerations, when visiting Svalbard and the Arctic.

Included our first edition in 2008, AECO has printed almost 70 000 copies of the *Guidelines for visitors to the Arctic*. Costs of re-printing the guidelines after the first edition and a later renewal of the lay-out/design have been covered by AECO-members.

In addition to handing out the *Guidelines for visitors to the Arctic* to cruise passengers, AECO is continuously seeking other methods to get the message regarding how to behave when visiting the Arctic, to as many as possible. We have therefore published our *Guidelines for visitors to the Arctic*, together with all our other guidelines, on our new website www.aeco.no. We have also developed a PowerPoint-presentation about the guidelines, which Expeditions Leaders (ELs) and guides can use when educating the guests onboard cruise vessels. The guests will most often be introduced to the guidelines in the beginning of a voyage by a EL or guide showing the PowerPoint in a screen, while the paper edition is handed out or available in cabins.

This method works, but not necessarily optimal - and we saw possibilities for improvements. We therefore applied Svalbard Environmental Protection Fund for funding to develop *Guidelines for Visitors to the Arctic* as an animated film. There are several reasons for us to believe that an animation of the guidelines represents an improvement of the previous communications:

- A short animated film normally stands a much larger chance of keeping the audience's attention than a PowerPoint presentation and a printed brochure.
- An animated film will give the same message to all cruise passengers, regardless of who is in charge of the presentation. Present method gives room for individual presentation and to some degree individual interpretations. Exchanging the PowerPoint with a film will ensure consistency in the messages we send out.
- Developing an animations gives an opportunity to present the message in a number of languages. The idea is to make it possible to play the movie with choice of a number of different language versions. This increase the possibility of making the message understood by guests who earlier had to receive the message in a language that is not their mother tongue.
- Developing an animation film to ensure good communication of important messages corresponds with the general development in communication. Traditional communication-methods are developing and animated films are one of the modern languages we see replacing the traditional methods. Our idea of a film can be compared with the safety demonstration animated films that is used onboard airplanes and ferries, but our characters and expressions might, however, be different.

- With almost 70 000 printed copies of the *Guidelines for visitors to the Arctic* so far, we were seeking ways of reducing the number of prints in the future.

Svalbard Environmental Protection Fund allocated 650 000 to this project in November 2014. We started working on the project immediately and tasks included:

- Choosing a partner – animation studio.
 - Raindog Studios had the best proposal within our financial limitation.
- Establishing a project group.
 - Members were Troels Jacobsen from Oceanwide Expeditions, Jørn Henriksen from Hurtigruten and Frigg Jørgensen from AECO.
- Communication with our members to ensure compliance with needs.

From January to June 2014 AECO and Raindog Studios worked intensively to finalize the animation prior to the 2014 sailing season. While Raindog Studios had responsibility for the production, members in general and the project group in particular, had to make many considerations and decision as the production developed.

We managed to have the first version of the animation ready by the cruise season 2014 and most of AECO's members immediately started to use it. Feed-backs were good, but members would like to have additional languages of the sub-titles. Especially growing markets like China, Japan, Russia and a few others seems to be in need of receiving important information in their native languages.

The press-releases we issued in June 2014 received a lot of attention, also internationally. Glimpse from the animation was shown on "Dagsrevyen", while "Svalbardposten" linked to the movie from their web-page. Several of AECO's members, and others, have linked to this animation.

After the 2014-sesason, AECO evaluated the animation and together with Raindog decided to redraw a couple of scenes and improve the summary. We were able to add subtitles in a number of languages.

AECO's Animated visitor's guidelines are now available with 14 different languages, and each film is available in Full version as well as three shorter "episodes".

The projects has been finalized in accordance with plans and application – and meets the objectives.

AECO was founded in 2003 and is an international organization for Arctic expedition cruise operators and related enterprises. We are dedicated to manage respectable, environmentally-friendly and safe expeditions in the Arctic. AECO presently has 45 members, 25 of these operators of approximately 30 vessels in the Arctic and Svalbard waters – bringing 11 000 – 12 000 visitors to Svalbard annually.

