



BRITISH ANTARCTIC TERRITORY STRATEGY 2019 - 2029

This strategy has been drawn up after consultation with a range of stakeholders and builds on the 2014-2019 Strategy. It will be reviewed annually and updated as appropriate with a full review in 10 years.

Our overarching aim is...

To maintain the security and good governance of the British Antarctic Territory

Our headline objectives are...

- 1. To promote the British Antarctic Territory and UK in Antarctica, including by increasing awareness through education and outreach with partners;*
- 2. To protect the Territory's environment, on the basis of thorough science and research;*
- 3. To preserve British heritage for future generations;*
- 4. Ensure there is an effective and proportionate legislative and administrative framework;*
- 5. To effectively administer the Territory, including managing finances in accordance with the best financial practice.*

Supporting the objectives

Central to this strategy is the core objective of ensuring the security and good governance of the British Antarctic Territory (BAT), consistent with the UK's objective for all UK Overseas Territories. This includes the protection of UK sovereign interests in Antarctica. It is written with full respect to Article IV of the Antarctic Treaty. The preservation and maintenance of the Antarctic Treaty remains the core objective of the UK's strategy in Antarctica.

The Government of the BAT will work in partnership with relevant stakeholders in the UK's Antarctic community to help deliver these objectives. This 10-year strategy will be reviewed annually and updated as appropriate in consultation with BAT stakeholders.

The Territory will commission and support projects that are undertaken in partnership with key stakeholders, usually only when no other appropriate funding sources are available, and be subject to the amount of income generated by the Territory in any given year. Projects must support at least one headline objective.

1. To promote the British Antarctic Territory and UK in Antarctica, including by increasing awareness through education and outreach with partners; we will...

1.1 maintain and strengthen partnerships with key stakeholders and their communications teams to ensure key messages are delivered and consistent.

1.2 use important anniversaries and events to deliver key messages.

1.3 support projects that help to raise awareness of BAT and Antarctica within the UK and beyond.

1.4 operate a dedicated BAT website providing information and news for those with an interest in the Territory, sharing news of stakeholder activity where appropriate.

1.5 operate a BAT Twitter account, providing regular highlights of both our work and that of key partners.

1.6 make use of the Territory's stamps and coins to highlight events and areas of interest for which the audience can be informed of wider issues affecting or relating to Antarctica.

2. To protect the Territory's environment, on the basis of thorough science and research, we will...

2.1 provide support to the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), the UK's National Antarctic Programme, in their efforts to conduct world-class Antarctic science and support the UK's wider Antarctic science community.

2.2 work with and support the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) to ensure BAT's responsibilities to the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) are met.

2.3 support projects which provide research or support environmental protection issues for BAT, including efforts to assess the impacts of climate change.

2.4 support efforts to protect and study the marine environment around BAT.

2.5 encourage activity, funded by the UK Government or through philanthropic means, which increases understanding of BATs environment and assists in its protection.

3. To preserve British heritage for future generations; we will...

3.1 work to ensure the BAT's Heritage Strategy, for both terrestrial and marine heritage, is implemented.

3.2 work closely with the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust (UKAHT) and BAS to ensure current and historic bases and sites are well managed, through regular engagement and a formal Historic Bases Working Group.

3.3 provide support to projects related to British Antarctic heritage or heritage in the BAT, including supporting projects relating to education and outreach on the history and heritage of UK involvement in Antarctica.

3.4 support the ongoing maintenance of BAT records within the Scott Polar Research Institute's (SPRI) library.

3.5 working with BAS, UKAHT, SPRI, and/or the Royal Geographical Society as appropriate on historical areas of interests such as exhibitions, documentaries and support for UK education resources.

4. Ensure there is an effective and proportionate legislative and administrative framework, through...

4.1 ensuring key Administration roles such as Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Administrator and Attorney General are filled and meeting their responsibilities.

4.2. Close co-operation with BAS, ensuring BAT Magistrates receive necessary support and guidance in which to undertake their duties.

4.3 Regular review of all the BAT Ordinances, working with the BAT Attorney General to ensure legislation is up-to-date and in line with best practice.

4.4 Introduce new legislation when a policy need is identified.

4.5 ensure that we take account of the impacts of climate change on the Territory when making policy decisions about its governance.

5. To effectively administer the Territory, including managing finances in accordance with the best financial practice, we will...

5.1 maintain an efficient and effective philatelic service, which additionally provides revenue for re-investment in the Territory.

5.2 maintain a BAT legal tender for use in the Territory and for sale to collectors.

5.3 comply with our internal principles of budget management, including maintaining a suitable level of capital reserve to respond to unforeseen or emergency situations.

5.4 ensure suitable oversight of spending, including an annual audit of BAT accounts using a reputable third party auditor; quarterly reviews of BAT finances, with sign off by the Commissioner required at the mid-year and end of year points; and ensure a minimum of 3-person spend approval to minimise any risk of fraud.

5.5 continue to explore new ways of increasing revenue and financial sustainability for the Territory.

Analysis

The UK's claim is the oldest legal claim in Antarctica. All territorial sovereignty claims to Antarctica are held in abeyance under Article IV of the Antarctic Treaty 1959 to which the UK is an original signatory.

The Territory has no indigenous population. Presence in the Territory is provided by: the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), who operate three scientific stations; the UK's ice patrol vessel, HMS Protector; and the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust, who manage and maintain a range of British historic bases in the Territory, including Port Lockroy.

The Territory is self-financed, receiving annual revenue from income tax on overwintering scientists, stamp and coin sales and interest from its capital reserves. This income is used to finance the governance of the Territory, as set out in the annual Estimates, as well as a range of special projects to further underpin good governance.

BAT is administered in London by staff in the Polar Regions Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.