



## Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands

### POLICY - PLACE NAMES

#### Summary

The Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI) has not approved any new place names since 2016. To rectify that GSGSSI appointed a representative to the Antarctic Place-names Committee (APC). This policy is the first time GSGSSI has set out how it wishes the APC guidelines to be applied to GSGSSI naming proposals, and whilst it does not contravene the Place-names Ordinance 1956, it has served to show that the existing legislation is now very old and required refreshing and simplifying.

#### Purpose of Place Naming

The purpose of naming places is to ensure that physical features can be unambiguously identified for scientific and navigational purposes, including Search and Rescue. This policy covers the naming of underwater features, which are within 12 nautical miles of the coast. Names for features more than 12 nautical miles offshore are dealt with by the International Hydrographic Organization.

#### Reason for the Policy

To identify the official list of the names of places within the Territory.

To provide for a process to guide place-naming in the territory. This is to avoid confusion from duplication of names, multiple names of the same feature, or the local adoption of confusing or otherwise inappropriate names.

#### Who is affected by this Policy

Any person or organization wishing to propose names for places on GSGSSI.

Any person or organization involved in the Antarctic Place Names Committee including the British Antarctic Survey.

#### Responsible Officer

Director of Fisheries and Environment.

#### Current Legislation

Place-names Ordinance 1956

Place-names Regulations 1957

### **Current Position**

British Antarctic Survey (BAS) are contracted to provide Geographical Information Support to the Government of the British Antarctic Territory (BAT), including maintenance and development of the Antarctic Place Names Committee website, Gazetteer, and web-map, and administration for the Committee. Further details may be found on <https://apc.antarctica.ac.uk/>.

The Committee advises the Commissioners of the BAT and the GSGSSI on matters relating to place-naming in their respective Territories. The names are subject to approval by the relevant Commissioners.

The GSGSSI is very grateful to BAT for convening the APC and permitting the GSGSSI to be a member.

### **Naming Preferences**

The Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands requests that place-name proposals for the territory are considered with the following guidelines in mind:

1. The feature must have a scientific and navigational need to be named, rather than simply remaining unnamed.
2. Preference be given to descriptive rather than a personal name for a feature.
3. If personal names are considered appropriate that there is a preference for posthumous names.

Except for the above the APC guidelines and forms are to be followed by proposers as prescribed on the website.

### **Current Procedure**

The Committee meets twice a year (virtually when needed), to consider proposals and make recommendations for place names in BAT and GSGSSI. It will exchange information and liaise with the Antarctic Place-names Committees of other states in the consideration and formulation of place-names. Although this is unlikely to be necessary for GSGSSI proposals.

The Committee maintains a gazetteer for all approved names within BAT and SGSSI.

Any person or organization may propose a new place name. Such proposals may be made to the APC by completing the Antarctic Place-name Proposal Form which should then be submitted to the Secretary of the APC.

A formal record of the agreement to a place name by a Commissioner is to be maintained by the relevant Administration.

All details are available on the APC website. This policy and links to the APC website will be available on the GSGSSI website [www.gov.gs](http://www.gov.gs).

### **Composition of the Antarctic Place Names Committee**

The Committee is composed of experts from the fields of Antarctic toponymy, science, geography, history, navigation, international relations and exploration. It includes representatives from the following organisations:

- \* Government of British Antarctic Territory
- \* Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands

- \* British Antarctic Survey
- \* Permanent Committee on Geographical Names
- \* Royal Geographical Society
- \* Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge
- \* UK Antarctic Heritage Trust
- \* UK Hydrographic Office

In addition, the committee may include expert members with expertise in Antarctic toponymy and up to four ad hoc members with expertise in relevant disciplines. Independent experts may be invited to Committee meetings if felt necessary by BAT or GSGSSI.

The Secretary is responsible for all administrative and organisational work of the APC and is based at the BAS in Cambridge.

**Date of Entry**

This policy comes into effect on 11 September 2020 and will be reviewed before the 10 September 2025.