



Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands

POLICY - SCATTERING ASHES (HUMAN REMAINS) AND BURIAL OF HUMAN REMAINS

Summary

This document sets out the policy of GSGSSI in relation to the disposal of cremated human remains, herein referred to as “ashes” in South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. This document replaces the Policy Statement issued on 17th August 2015.

Definitions and abbreviations

“Ashes” means all the material left in the cremator after a cremation, and following—

- (a) the removal of any metal, and
- (b) any subsequent grinding or other process which is applied to the material.

“cremation” means the burning of human remains

“GSGSSI” --- Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands

“SGSSI” --- South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands

Who is affected by this Policy?

Persons requesting disposal of ashes in SGSSI, or burial of human remains on SGSSI.

Policy

GSGSSI recognises that the scattering of ashes is a relatively benign procedure with little risk to the environment of SGSSI. The scattering of ashes on South Georgia is permitted if it is carried out in accordance with the conditions outlined below. The scattering of ashes is not permitted on the South Sandwich Islands

1. Only the scattering of ashes is permitted. The burial of ashes, or the burial and/or disposal of the associated container is not included in this permission. The burial or any other form of disposal of human remains is not permitted.

2. The ashes must be free of all organic matter, metals, or any other material not present as a consequence of the cremation process. They must be carried in a biodegradable container. GSGSSI reserve the right to inspect any container.
3. The ashes must be placed on the ground or cast into the air. No digging or raking of the ashes into the ground is permitted.
4. At least 60 days prior to the scattering of ashes, GSGSSI require notification from the person intending to scatter the ashes, details of the person whose ashes are being scattered and the location on South Georgia where the ashes are intended to be scattered.
5. The scattering of ashes will not be permitted in any area where such activity may cause disturbance to protected wildlife. GSGSSI will notify the person responsible for scattering the ashes of any such restrictions and propose an alternative location.
6. The person scattering the ashes must have the appropriate authority to enter SGSSI under the relevant Immigration Ordinance. The scattering of ashes does not carry with it automatic permission for relatives or friends or associated persons to accompany the ashes or remains and visit SGSSI, or to make subsequent visits relating to the original event.
7. No plaque, memorial, planting or any other installation will be permitted without a separate permit. GSGSSI retains the right to dispose of any such article erected, planted, or placed without permission. A book of Remembrance is kept in the church at Grytviken. In this book a record can be made of the scattering of the deceased's ashes, any connection with SGSSI, and any tributes from friends and family.
8. GSGSSI shall not be liable for any costs, or transportation associated with the scattering of ashes.
9. Exceptions to this policy may be permitted, where exceptional circumstances apply, by the Commissioner for SGSSI. The Commissioner may apply any reasonable conditions to such a permission. Such applications for exceptions may be liable for a fee to cover administration costs.

Procedures

Notification of the intention to scatter ashes shall be made in writing or by email to: The Chief Executive Officer of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, Government House, Stanley, Falkland Islands, FIQQ 1ZZ (admin@gov.gs). Applications for exceptions to this policy should be sent to the same address.

All notifications shall include details of the deceased, and their association with South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, the proposed means, date and location of disposal, and any other relevant matters.

A record of all persons who have had their ashes scattered, or burial shall be kept at Government House, Stanley, Falkland Islands. This will contain the following information:

- Name of deceased,
- Date of birth/death,
- Date and location where ashes are scattered,
- Connection with SGSSI (if any),
- Name of person who is scattering ashes and their relationship with the deceased.

Date of Entry

This policy comes into effect on 1 November 2021 and will be reviewed before the 30 October 2026

Contact

Chief Executive Officer
Email: admin@gov.gs
Phone +500 28214