



Australian Government
Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism
Department of Immigration and Citizenship



CHINA ADS FOCUS

A quarterly newsletter for
ADS Inbound Tour Operators

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Welcome to the fourteenth edition of the China ADS eNewsletter. The newsletter is produced by the Government Coordination Group (GCG) for the ADS scheme – the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism (RET), the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) and Tourism Australia (TA).

This edition covers:

- Free Time Component for ADS Tours;
- Greater China Travel Mission a Success;
- Seasons Greetings;
- Helpful Reminders; and
- Suspensions.

Free Time Component for ADS Tours

A free time component will now be a permanent option for itineraries, following the success of the trial. Implemented in December 2008 as a trial, the free time component in the tour itinerary allows agents to better respond to the changing demands in the maturing PRC market.

The free time component which was initially for a single block of 24 hours' free time has been changed to a maximum of **two blocks of up to 12 hours each**. For instance an agent may introduce one six hour free time period and one eight hour free time period in an itinerary. This will provide greater flexibility and variety to ADS travellers.

New agents may wish to explore introducing the free time component into their itineraries. The free time component allows agents to offer itineraries that provide tourists with free time to explore at their own pace. This is a great option for travellers who want to catch up with family or friends in Australia and those who want to visit attractions not included in the standard itinerary. Free time is also a great opportunity for agents, who are able to offer optional activities or tours for those tourists who prefer to have a guide.

For Free Time itineraries, the usual ADS conditions apply and, in addition, for the free time component, the following conditions apply:

- The amount of free time in an itinerary is a maximum of two blocks of up to 12 hours each. Tours can choose to include either one or two blocks of free time. Each block can be for a shorter period if you wish.
- The tour leader and tour guide must meet the group at the end of each free time period at the place identified in the itinerary.
- ADS agents must book accommodation for the entire group during each free time period and include the accommodation details in the itinerary.
- The tour leader must be contactable during each free time period, and provide free time tour members with their mobile phone number, and should assist tour members in any way possible.
- The inclusion of a free time period in any ADS tour is optional.

We appreciate your feedback and comments regarding this newsletter and the ADS scheme in general. Please contact the ADS Executive Office

Hotline: 1800 048 155

Email: ads@ret.gov.au

Web: www.ret.gov.au/tourism_ads

Cont'd - Free Time Component for ADS Tours

- No business activities can be conducted on an ADS tour – this includes during any period of free time.
- Free time itineraries must be clearly marked, either at the top of the itinerary as part of the group's Post Reference number or as part of the email's name, eg. "B0100999004 Free Time".
- Agents must clearly indicate in the itinerary when each period of free time will occur. Start times and end times must be clearly marked on the itinerary.
- All members of the tour group must meet with the tour leader at the end time of each free time period, and if any members of the tour have not arrived by that time the Australian ADS agent must send an absconder report to the ADS Unit at the Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

It is important that ADS agents ensure that all tour members understand the conditions on their ADS visa, whether or not free time is included in their tour itinerary.

Questions about the free time component can be directed to: ads@immi.gov.au

Greater China Travel Mission a Success

Tourism Australia hosted the first Greater China Travel Mission in Guangzhou China targeting mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan travel agents 8-12 November.

The Greater China Travel Mission targets group and leisure travel markets and provided direct access to key travel agents, tour operators, government representatives, media and airlines in Greater China Regions of China Mainland, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region & Taiwan. The event is also an opportunity to educate Australian suppliers on some of the challenges and business opportunities in the Greater China Regions as well as the opportunity for the development of new itineraries and inclusion of a more diverse product range in the market.

47 Sellers representing Australian destinations, ITO's and tourism product participated in the event, together with 173 Buyers representing key travel agents from the Greater China region.

One of the satisfying aspects for Tourism Australia was the active participation of 10 of our Australian ADS ITO's who now see the Greater China Mission an important for developing new business partnerships and opportunities.

This was the largest ADS ITO participation for many years and Tourism Australia acknowledges and thanks the following ITO's for their participation and support:

ANZ Travel Services, Auga Travel, Australian Tours Management, Equity Travel, Experience Tours Australia (a division of AOT Inbound), Grandcity (Australia) Travel & Tour, Joy Travel, Lion International Travel Service, New Asia Pacific Travel, PTC Express Travel and Wel-Travel Australia.



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Cont'd - Greater China Travel Mission a Success

The Mission included a briefing for the Australian Sellers on the latest market trends and activities by Richard Beere, Executive General Manager, Eastern Hemisphere, Johnny Nee, Regional General Manager, North Asia, Zoe Lo, Marketing Communication Manager and Edward Chen, Regional Industry Development Manager from Tourism Australia China.



An important initiative was an industry forum with trade distribution and marketing prioritisation as key topics. Tourism Australia invited 5 key Buyer representatives from Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Taiwan to answer questions on these topics from the Australian Sellers.

There were 4,512 one-on-one appointments conducted between Sellers and Buyers over the 3 days.



The feedback from Buyers and Sellers has been very positive which will ensure even greater participation in the Greater China Travel Mission in 2010.

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Seasons Greetings

With the Christmas season upon us, we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and new year season.



Helpful Reminders

1. There are a number of itineraries being submitted that contain an incorrect telephone number for the Consumer Hotline. Please ensure that the contact numbers you include in your itineraries are the correct numbers –

Consumer Hotline: 1300 552 263

Interpreter Service: 131 450.
2. Don't forget to include the commission declaration statement in your itineraries. This must appear *in the itinerary* as part of every commission-based inclusion. The correct wording can be obtained from the Itinerary on the website or from your Application Information Package.
3. A series of recent Financial Checks conducted by the CMA has discovered sub-standard accounting and record-keeping practices by several ITOs. These are Category 2 breaches and can result in suspension or revocation of ADS approval. Maintaining your books of account and all ADS financial records is not only a requirement of the Code, but also of the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Both the ATO and the Compliance Monitoring Agency can audit your ADS records at any time. For these reasons, it is vital that you maintain your ADS records at least at the minimum standard required by the ATO. That is, evidence of ALL ADS financial transactions and records **MUST BE KEPT**. This includes, but is not limited to - receipts, invoices, deposit verifications, remittance advices and contracts. If in doubt, keep it.

Suspensions

There are currently no operators under suspension.

If you are considering doing business with another agent, you should check the Gazette Notice first to ensure they are ADS approved. You can find the current Gazette Notice on the website at www.ret.gov.au/tourism_ads.

If you trade with any operator whilst they are either suspended or not ADS approved, you will be in breach of the Code and may face suspension yourself.

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