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Who is AFTA?

- AFTA – industry body representing Australian travel industry
- Founded in 1957
- Membership organisation with over 2,500 members.
- Membership base comprises of more than 96% of total travel intermediary turnover
- AFTA’s primary objectives are to enhance the professionalism of travel agents through:
  - the effective representation in industry and government affairs
  - facilitating changes to education and training curriculum,
  - providing business support through professional advice and services, and
  - administration of the national travel accreditation scheme, ATAS
AFTA’s key industry focus
Background: Travel Industry Reform

- Australian Government released a Travel Industry Transition Plan (TITP) Dec 2012
- The previous *national licensing scheme* was introduced 1986 & has gradually reduced in relevance and effectiveness
- Decision to reform the industry to reflect changes in the market place and the way consumers book travel now
- TITP 2012 objective were to:
  - Remove duplication between state-based licensing requirements and other laws (e.g. ACL).
  - Reduce compliance burden on travel intermediaries.
  - Reduce costs of doing business.
  - Capture all intermediaries – level the playing field.
  - Introduce a voluntary industry accreditation scheme
- AFTA received a grant to establish a voluntary industry accreditation scheme
ATAS delivers on reform objectives

- Remove inconsistencies between state-based licensing requirements
  - ATAS is national voluntary industry accreditation scheme

- Create a level playing field
  - ATAS is for ALL travel intermediaries (those that buy and sell travel)

- Reduce compliance burden and cost on travel intermediaries
  - Lower cost of entry, no license fee, no annual audit

- Elevate travel industry standards
  - Participants are vetted against strict criteria to help consumers identify reputable, professional and reliable travel professionals.
What is ATAS?

- ATAS – AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme
- Launched 1 July 2014
- ATAS sets a new benchmark of quality for the travel industry

ATAS is a brand new accreditation scheme for the Australian travel industry which delivers criteria-based identification of reputable travel professionals and the necessary flexibility to accommodate the industry’s diversity and the ever changing and varied ways of purchasing travel.

- ATAS is the result of 5 years’ comprehensive consultation between the travel industry and Government agencies including the Consumer Affairs Ministries.
- ATAS helps consumers identify reputable, professional and reliable travel professionals through whom they can book travel solutions with peace of mind.
- ATAS provides a valuable third party endorsement
What is ATAS?

ATAS travel accredited

Helps consumers identify reputable & professional travel businesses.
Elevating travel industry standards in Australia by driving increased and continued participation by travel intermediaries in ATAS... and raising consumer awareness of the benefits of booking travel through an ATAS accredited agent.
ATAS participants must meet set criteria

1. Meet definition of a ‘Travel Intermediary’
2. Workforce development
3. Dispute resolution & complaint handling
4. Commercial safeguards
5. Business compliance and governance
6. Charter & Code of Conduct
7. Consumer protection & engagement (Deed Poll, ACL)
8. Payment of fees
9. Special criteria for start-up businesses
Consumer Benefits of ATAS accreditation

- Shop with confidence knowing that ATAS participants meet stringent ethical, training and businesses requirements.

- Expanded and more equitable solution to cover all travel intermediaries, agency groups, large and small and sole practitioners.

- The benefits of booking with ATAS participants include:
  - High customer service standards
  - Destination and product expertise and knowledge
  - Complaints resolution
  - Choice and flexibility
  - Convenience, hassle free and time saving
  - Cost savings and value for money
  - Trusted, professional adviser
Industry Benefits of ATAS Accreditation

- Reforms work for the largest as well as independent travel agency groups and sole operators
- A de-regulated market means incredible opportunities for existing agency owners to grow their business.
- Reforms accommodate travel today to include online operators based in Australia
- Promote importance to consumers of booking through Australian-based travel professionals and making sure they have appropriate personal travel insurance.
- Range of optional insolvency insurances available
ATAS...

1. Sets new standards

2. Helps deliver the right travel solution, each time, every time

3. Levels the playing field

4. Provides consumer “peace of mind”
1. Sets new standards

- AFTA has more than 57 years of experience in delivering standards for the travel industry in Australia.

- ATAS is built upon high professional standards including - business disciplines, training, compliance with Australian law, compliance with a code of conduct – ensuring consumers’ peace of mind when dealing with travel professionals.

- ATAS is an expanded and more equitable solution to cover travel suppliers, aggregators, as well as agency groups, large and small, listed and privately held, and sole practitioners.

- Accreditation provides consumers with a best in class choice when looking for a travel provider
2. Helps deliver the right travel solution

- Save time when booking via ATAS-accredited intermediaries by dealing with a professional delivering convenient, reliable service which saves you time and money.
- Travel professionals are structured to be extremely competitive, often guaranteeing to price-match or beat any offers found elsewhere.
- ATAS participants are trusted advocates who offer insider access to products, suppliers and first-to-market offers.
- Human touch to take the hassle out of creating complex and personalised itineraries, removing the need to spend hours researching and booking it all separately.
3. Levels the playing field

- ATAS is a robust, nimble structure which reflects the changing face of the travel value distribution chain.
- ATAS solution – it delivers choice and flexibility for the industry to best meet the needs of their clients and their businesses.
- ATAS brings the travel sector into line with the rest of the Australian economy through the application of Australian consumer law, corporations’ law, industry-specific measures and oversight as the principle protection mechanisms.
- Compliance with the new Australian Consumer Law is a paramount platform of the accreditation scheme.
- Scheme is voluntary, we believe most reputable travel intermediaries will choose to join.
4. Provides consumers with “peace of mind”

- Consumers receive support, expertise, experience, credentials which come with booking travel through the safety of an ATAS-accredited travel professional.
ATAS’ Total Product Model

- ATAS means something different to its different audiences;
Travel Accredited - what consumers value

ATAS “Travel Accredited” Brand Promise

- **Trained / Qualified**
  - Staff have completed relevant courses

- **Product Experts**
  - Travel experience or product trained

- **Ethical Business**
  - ACL, Code of Conduct, Complaints handling policy

- **Trusted**
  - Business compliant

- **Deliver Services**
  - Peace of mind that comes with booking via an “accredited agent”

“Makes me feel confident when handing over my money”
Empty Nester

“It gives you peace of mind that they have met some sort of standard”
Family

“IT demonstrates a level of professionalism, they know what they are taking about and can make the right recommendations”
Empty Nester
Summary

Greater reliance on existing Australian Consumer Law

ATAS helps consumers identify reputable, credible businesses

Commenced 1 July 2014

Developed and administered by AFTA

Voluntary, industry led scheme

Does not replace the TCF which ceased on 30 June 2014

Governed by the ATAS Charter and participants must abide by a Code of Conduct
More information?

Trade website > www.afta.com.au

Consumer website > www.atas.com.au