

WTAAA Press Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WTAAA Holds Meeting in São Paulo

Brussels, Belgium, Apr. 9, 2013 – The World Travel Agents Associations Alliance (WTAAA) held its bi-annual board meeting in São Paulo, Brazil March 25-26. WTAAA meets twice a year to discuss issues that impact the global travel agency industry, and to share common problem-solving strategies.

“It is crystal clear to everyone that the travel industry is truly a global industry, and despite geopolitical boundaries that often separate us, the issues we face are shared,” said WTAAA Chairman Lars Thykier. “As an industry, it’s important that we work together to discuss ways we can improve the business of selling travel for our members, and at the same time improve the process of traveling for the consumers they represent.”

WTAAA’s agenda included discussions on the International Air Transport Association’s (IATA) New Distribution Capability (NDC), Airline Debit Memos (ADM), visa facilitation and various other industry issues.

WTAAA is closely monitoring IATA’s NDC project and continues to encourage IATA to maintain an open dialogue on NDC and to ensure that travel agents views are taken seriously. Many of WTAAA members are also on IATA’s recently formed Agents-Airlines Forum (AAF), which meets regularly to review distribution issues, including NDC.

“We are pleased that IATA has opened the NDC dialogue with WTAAA, which is preeminent global travel agency association whose travel agency members are responsible for over 80 percent of all global travel agency sales,” said Thykier. “As part of this dialogue, WTAAA has shared a list of concerns with IATA, which include, but are not limited to, three major issues. First, NDC appears to eliminate or reduce consumers’ ability to carry out neutral comparison shopping, which currently promotes competition of airfares between carriers. Second, NDC appears to require the disclosure of consumers’ personal data as a precondition for obtaining a fare quote, which raises a host of data privacy concerns. And third, NDC appears to impose huge costs directly on to travel agencies, and indirectly to their customers, as travel agency systems and processes would need to be redesigned to accommodate NDC.”

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“We have made it clear to IATA that we are not opposed to a more efficient way of doing business, however we need to ensure that the end justifies the means for everyone (consumers and travel agents), and not just the airlines.”

The WTAAA board would like to thank its most recent member, the Association of Brazilian Travel Agents (ABAV), for hosting the meeting, including special recognition to Antonio Azevedo, ABAV President, and Leonel Rossi, ABAV VP International Relations, for their warm hospitality.

WTAAA will hold its next board meeting in early November in Cordoba, Spain.

ABOUT WTAAA

The mission of the World Travel Agents Associations Alliance (WTAAA) is to act as the global travel agency voice through the exchange of ideas and information. WTAAA members include the American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA), Association of Canadian Travel Agencies (ACTA), Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA), Association of Brazilian Travel Agents (ABAV), European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations (ECTAA), Association of South African Travel Agents (ASATA), Travel Agency Federation of India (TAFI) and Travel Agents' Association of New Zealand (TAANZ).

A list of articles (in Portuguese) related to the São Paulo meeting can be found below.

<http://www.hostnews.com.ar/index.php/news/161/16/La-ABAV-anfitriona-de-la-reunion-de-la-WTAAA.htm>

<http://www.feirasnegocios.com.br/?p=noticiasDetalhe¬icia=899>

<http://www.abeoc.org.br/2013/03/abav-recebe-hoje-integrantes-de-oito-associacoes-de-agencias-de-viagens/>

<http://www.reginalemos.blogspot.com.br/2013/03/alianca-mundial-das-associacoes-de.html>

<http://turismocristinaliranatal.blogspot.com.br/2013/03/abav-promove-reuniao-com-wtaaa-em-sao.html>

http://www.panrotas.com.br/noticia-turismo/eventos/abav-reune-se-com-entidade-global-de-agencias-_86694.html?pesquisa=1

<http://www.mercadoeventos.com.br/site/noticias/view/93916>