

# COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program Guidelines

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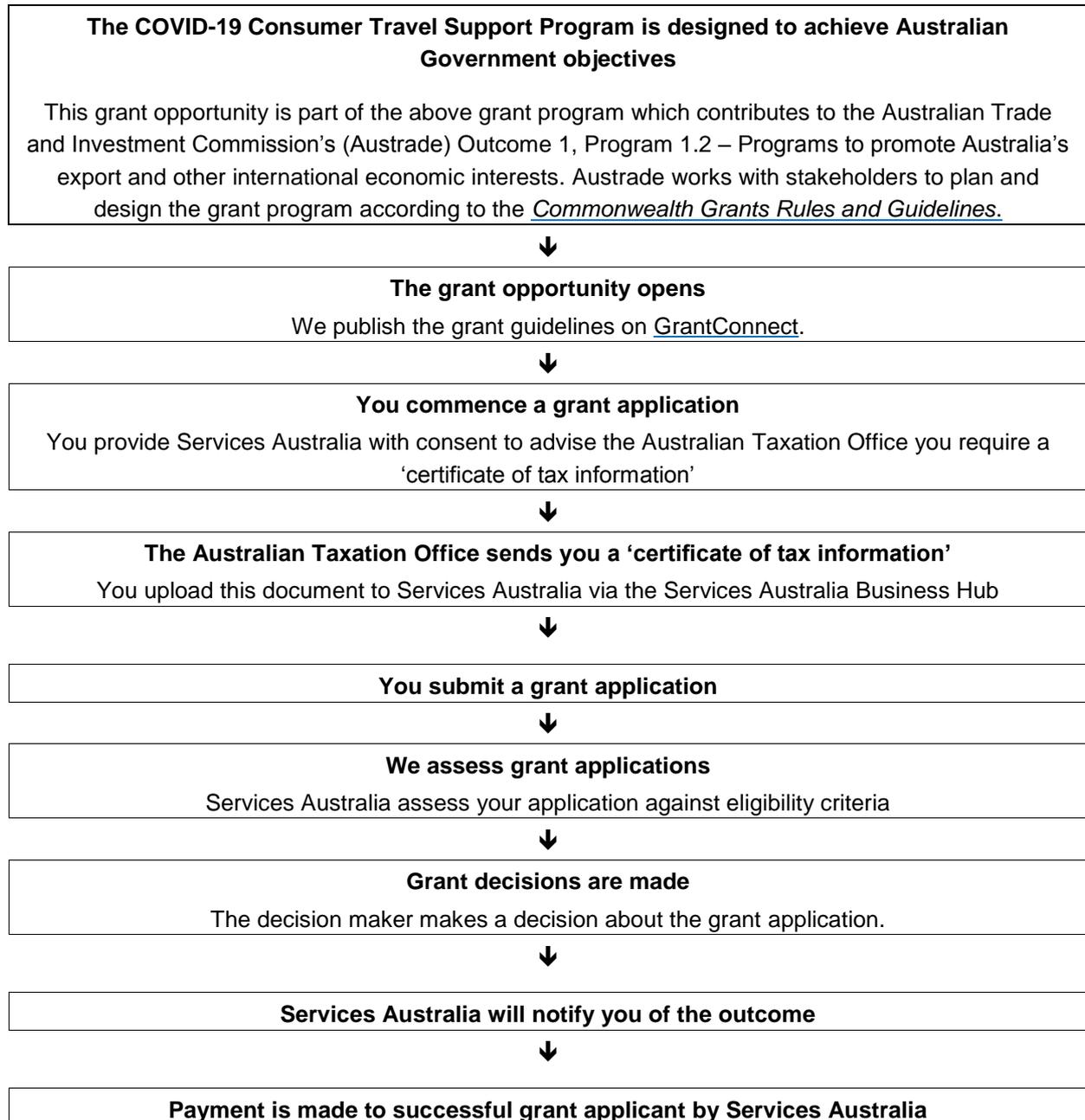
<b>Opening date:</b>	14 December 2020
<b>Closing date and time:</b>	Midnight AEDT on 13 March 2021, unless program funds are exhausted prior to 13 March 2021.
<b>Commonwealth policy entity:</b>	Australian Trade and Investment Commission
<b>Administering entity</b>	Services Australia
<b>Enquiries:</b>	If you have any questions, contact Services Australia at: <a href="http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/travelsupportprogram">www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/travelsupportprogram</a> or by calling 1800 560 774.
<b>Date guidelines released:</b>	<b>14 12 2020</b>
<b>Type of grant opportunity:</b>	Demand-driven (Eligibility-based)

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# 1. COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program processes



## 1.1 Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program grants.

This grant opportunity was announced by the Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, on 1 December 2020.

You must read this document before applying for a grant.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant opportunity
- the eligibility criteria
- how grant applications are considered and selected
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

This grant opportunity and process will be administered by Services Australia on behalf of Austrade.

## 2. About the grant program

The COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program (the program) will provide a one-off payment in financial year 2020-21 to assist travel agents and tour arrangement service providers who have been disproportionately impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The objective of the program is to:

- assist travel agents, and tour arrangement service providers, that qualify for the Jobkeeper scheme, by providing immediate, short-term financial support, including for the purpose of ensuring that they can continue to trade and meet their legal obligations to process refunds and credits to Australian consumers.

The intended outcomes of the program are:

- to assist Australian consumers to receive refunds and credits for travel they were unable to undertake due to the impacts of COVID-19; and
- to assist travel agents and tour arrangement service providers to continue to trade or to recommence trade, where possible.

We administer the program according to the [\*Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines \(CGRGs\)\*](#)<sup>1</sup>.

## 3. Grant amount and grant period

The Australian Government has announced a total of \$128 million in financial year 2020-21 which is available for this grant opportunity, starting in December 2020.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf>

The minimum grant amount is \$1,500 per grantee.

The maximum grant amount is \$100,000 per grantee.

We will calculate the grant amount based on your annual GST turnover. The reference period for annual turnover will be your annual GST turnover figure for the 2019 calendar year. If your business was required to submit Business Activity Statements (BAS) in 2019, your turnover will be calculated as the total of your GST exclusive G1 figures reported in your BAS in the 2019 calendar year. You must have submitted all required BAS to be eligible.

Please note, if you are a member of a GST reporting group even though you may have an ABN, you may not have BAS reporting obligations and therefore will not have GST turnover attributed to the ABN. The reporting member in your GST reporting group that lodges the BAS on behalf of the group may apply for the grant (if otherwise eligible for the grant) and they will be solely responsible for making any payments to you and other GST group members.

The following methodology will be used to calculate the grant amount:

<b>Annual turnover for calendar year 2019</b>	<b>Grant amount</b>
Less than \$50,000	Not eligible
\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$1,500
\$100,000 and above, and up to \$20 million	\$1,500 plus an additional \$2,500 per every additional \$100,000 (or part thereof) in annual turnover up to a maximum grant amount of \$100,000
Over \$20 million	Not eligible

Please note:

- only one application per ABN registered business will be considered (that is, only one application per ABN);
- payment will only be made to an Australian bank account; and
- the amount will be paid as one lump sum payment to one bank account.

This grant opportunity will open on 14 December 2020 and applications will continue to be accepted until midnight (AEDT) on 13 March 2021 or until program funds are exhausted, whichever occurs earlier. Applications will be assessed for eligibility and awarded in order of receipt by Services Australia. Services Australia and Austrade will monitor ongoing expenditure under the program. If prior to 13 March 2021, program funds are almost fully committed, an addenda will be placed on GrantConnect. Services Australia will also advise new individual applicants.

## 4. Eligibility criteria

We may waive one or more of the eligibility criteria in exceptional circumstances. If you are not eligible you may contact Services Australia and this will be referred to Austrade for a decision on whether an application can be considered.

### 4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible to make a claim for the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program:

- your application must be submitted by someone who is listed as an 'eligible associate' on the Australian Business Register (to determine if someone is an 'eligible associate' refer <https://www.abr.gov.au/checking-your-abr-details-online>).

To be eligible, your business must:

- be a travel agent or tour arrangement service provider as defined at Part 12 of these Guidelines and have been operating as a travel agent or tour arrangement service provider prior to the announcement of the closure of international borders by the Prime Minister of Australia on 19 March 2020,
- have lodged a 2018-19 income tax return,
- have had an annual turnover starting from \$50,000 up to a maximum of \$20 million for the 2019 calendar year,
- have received a payment for a JobKeeper fortnight ending in October 2020 under the *Coronavirus Economic Response Package (Payments and Benefits) Rules 2020* - that is JobKeeper fortnight 14 (28 September 2020 to 11 October 2020) and JobKeeper fortnight 15 (12 October 2020 to 25 October 2020).
- have a registered and active Australian Business Number (ABN),
- for businesses with a turnover of more than \$75,000:
  - be registered for the purposes of GST, and
  - have lodged all required BAS for the 2019 calendar year.
- have an account with an Australian financial institution that is located within Australian territorial boundaries,
- provide evidence supporting you are a travel agent or tour arrangement service provider by holding active incorporation or registration in Australia as at 30 November 2020 with at least one of the following entities:
  - Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA)
  - Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC)
  - Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO), or
  - any other applicable tourism peak industry body (as determined by Austrade).

- if membership with one of the above entities is not held, provision of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) code 7220 'Travel Agency and Tour Arrangement Services' as submitted in your 2018-19 income tax return you lodged with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

## 5. What the grant money can be used for

### 5.1 Eligible grant activities

The grant may be used by travel agents and tour arrangement service providers to support them in dealing with the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes expenditure that assists them to continue to trade and process refunds and credits to Australian consumers for travel they were unable to undertake due to the impacts of COVID-19.

Proof of expenditure is not required.

## 6. How to apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these guidelines.

These documents may be found at [GrantConnect](#). Any alterations and addenda<sup>2</sup> will be published on GrantConnect and by registering on this website you will be automatically notified of any changes. GrantConnect is the authoritative source for grants information.

To apply you must:

- complete an online application form,
- provide all the information requested,
- include all necessary attachments, and
- submit your application.

You are responsible for ensuring that your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [Criminal Code 1995](#) and we will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should call Services Australia immediately on 1800 560 774. We do not have to accept any additional information, nor requests from you to correct your application after the closing time.

You cannot change your application after the closing date and time.

If Services Australia find an error or information that is missing, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application.

You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

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<sup>2</sup> Alterations and addenda include but are not limited to: corrections to currently published documents, changes to close times for applications, Questions and Answers (Q&A) documents and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents

You will make an online application using the Services Australia Business Hub, which requires a registration process.

If you need further guidance around the application process or if you are unable to submit an application online contact Services Australia at:

[www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/travelsupportprogram](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/travelsupportprogram) or by calling 1800 560 774.

## 6.1 Self declaration

If you are not registered for the GST, you can make a declaration that your business' turnover was between \$50,000 and \$75,000 in the 2019 calendar year. This declaration will require you to confirm that:

- the information you have provided is complete and correct, and
- if your declaration is false then any overpayment will be recovered, and
- giving false or misleading information is a serious offence.

The declaration is required in addition to submitting the certificate of tax information from the ATO (see below).

## 6.2 Attachments to the application

The following documents must be included with your application:

- identification for the applicant by way of PRODA (Provider Digital Access) registration process, and
- a certificate of tax information from the ATO which can be obtained by the following:
  - after starting your application you will receive a certificate of tax information from the ATO outlining certain information including your annual turnover for the 2019 calendar year. The certificate will be sent to the registered address that is listed for your ABN. Once you receive the certificate from the ATO, you will need to upload this document to Services Australia via the Services Australia Business Hub.
- evidence of active incorporation or registration in Australia as at 30 November 2020 with at least one of the entities listed at 4.1 of these Guidelines or provision of your ANZSIC code 7220 'Travel Agency and Tour Arrangement Services' as submitted in your 2018-19 income tax return you lodged with the ATO.

## 6.3 Timing of grant opportunity

You must submit an application between the published opening and closing dates. We cannot accept late applications.

The grant opportunity will run from 14 December 2020 to midnight (AEDT) on 13 March 2021 or until program funds are exhausted, whichever occurs earlier.

Activity	Timeframe
Assessment of applications	Ongoing
Approval of outcomes of selection process	4 weeks from submission of grant application inclusive of ATO certificate of tax information (ongoing)
Payment is made to successful grant applicants	1-2 weeks after approval of grant application (ongoing)

### 6.3 Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, please contact Services Australia by calling 1800 560 744.

## 7. The grant assessment process

Your application will be considered through a demand-driven grant process.

Your application will be assessed by Services Australia to ensure it meets the eligibility criteria.

If the assessment process identifies unintentional errors in your application, you may be contacted to correct or explain the information.

Eligible applications will be considered to be successful provided sufficient grant funding is available.

### 7.1 Who will approve grants?

Services Australia will make the final decision to approve a grant.

Services Australia decides which grants to approve taking into account the availability of grant funds for the purposes of the grant program.

The decision of Services Australia is final in all matters, including:

- the approval of the grant,
- the grant amount to be awarded, and
- the terms and conditions of the grant.

## 8. Notification of application outcomes

Services Australia will advise you of the outcome of your application. If you are successful, we will advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant payment.

## 9. Successful grant applications

### 9.1 The grant agreement

The grant agreement between you and Services Australia is set out in the online declaration submitted with your application. The agreement is effective once Services Australia notifies the applicant that it is successful.

### 9.2 How we pay the grant

Successful applicants must elect an Australian bank account number that is registered to the business to receive the payment. The grant will be paid as a one-off lump sum payment only.

### 9.3 Grant payments and taxation

The grant is not a payment for a supply as successful applicants are only required to satisfy eligibility criteria to receive the grant. There will be no GST consequences from the grant.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#).<sup>3</sup> We do not provide advice on your particular taxation circumstances.

## 10. Announcement of grants

Program guidelines and aggregated information about the total expenditure and number of payments provided under the program will be published on the [GrantConnect](#) website.

## 11. Probity

The Australian Government will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRGs.

### 11.1 Enquiries and feedback

In the case of your claim not meeting the eligibility requirements, details on the review process within Services Australia will be described in the letter to you.

You can request that a Services Australia Subject Matter Expert review a claim decision. If you disagree with the outcome, you can request a further review by a Services Australia Authorised Review Officer (ARO). You have the right to appeal an ARO decision within 29 days of the date of the decision.

If you do not agree with the way Services Australia has handled your complaint, you may complain to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#). The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the relevant Commonwealth entity.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ato.gov.au/>

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072  
Email: [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au)  
Website: [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)

## 11.2 Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if Austrade or Services Australia staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application process, such as an Australian Government officer, or
- has a relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently, or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under this grant opportunity.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform Services Australia in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be handled as set out in the [Australian Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13 \(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999](#). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

## 11.3 Privacy

We treat your personal information according to the [Privacy Act 1988](#) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect,
- why we collect your personal information, and
- who we give your personal information to.

Your personal information will be used and disclosed, including to the ATO and Austrade, to:

- determine the applicant's eligibility to receive a grant under the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program,
- if awarded a grant, to process and manage the application, and make payment of the grant, and
- administer, evaluate and monitor the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program.

Your personal information may be disclosed to the responsible Minister to report on the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program. The names of grant recipients, but not the amount awarded, will be published.

#### 11.4 Confidential Information

We will keep your application confidential.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively,
- employees and contractors of our department so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities,
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery,
- other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations,
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner,
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, or
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

#### 11.5 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about this grant opportunity, are subject to the [\*Freedom of Information Act 1982\*](#) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

All freedom of information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

By mail:           Freedom of Information Contact Officer  
                      Legal Procurement and Fraud  
                      Austrade  
                      GPO Box 2386  
                      Canberra ACT 2601

By email:         [foi.coordination.officer@austrade.gov.au](mailto:foi.coordination.officer@austrade.gov.au)

## 12. Glossary

Term	Definition
accountable authority	see subsection 12(2) of the <i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i> (PGPA Act)
administering entity	when an entity that is not responsible for the policy, is responsible for the administration of part or all of the grant administration processes
applicant	the party who is proposed to receive the grant. They must be listed as a contact person for the business on the Australian Business Register (ABR)
Austrade	Australian Trade and Investment Commission
decision maker	the person who makes a decision to award a grant
eligibility criteria	refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant
Commonwealth entity	a Department of State, or a Parliamentary Department, or a listed entity or a body corporate established by a law of the Commonwealth. See subsections 10(1) and (2) of the PGPA Act
<i>Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines</i> (CGRGs)	establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration
consumer	refers to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an individual or business who purchases travel products and travel packages for personal use or consumption,</li> <li>• wholesalers of travel products and travel packages,</li> <li>• retainers of travel products and travel packages, and</li> <li>• corporate buyers of travel products and travel packages</li> </ul>

Term	Definition
grant	<p>for the purposes of the CGRGs, a 'grant' is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. under which relevant money<sup>4</sup> or other <u>Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF)</u> money<sup>5</sup> is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth; and</li> <li>b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives</li> </ul>
grant activity/activities	refers to the project /tasks /services that the grantee is required to undertake
<u>GrantConnect</u>	is the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs
grant opportunity	refers to the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted, and will reflect the relevant grant selection process
grant program	a 'program' carries its natural meaning and is intended to cover a potentially wide range of related activities aimed at achieving government policy outcomes. A grant program is a group of one or more grant opportunities under a single Portfolio Budget Statement Program.
grantee	the individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant
selection process	the method used to select potential grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria

<sup>4</sup> Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

<sup>5</sup> Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

Term	Definition
<p>tour arrangement service provider (inbound and outbound)</p>	<p>an entity, that on a commission basis predominately operates a business of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. selling travel packages either directly or on behalf of third parties to consumers, and</li> <li>b. coordinating the booking reservations, confirmation and payments for travel packages either directly, or on behalf of third parties for consumers.</li> </ul> <p>For clarity: a Tour Arrangement Service Provider does not include a person or entity who operates the day-to-day running of a tour or tourism activity (such as a tour guide) and a person is not a Tour Arrangement Service Provider and is not taken to carry on a business of a Tour Arrangement Service Provider, only because the person is entitled to a share, as a shareholder, in the income of the business of a Tour Arrangement Service Provider that is a corporation</p>
<p>travel agent</p>	<p>an entity that, on a commission basis, predominantly operates a business of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. selling travel products either directly or on behalf of third parties to consumers, and</li> <li>b. coordinating the booking reservations, confirmations and payments for travel products either directly or on behalf of third parties for consumers.</li> </ul> <p>For clarity, a person is not a travel agent, and is not taken to carry on the business of a travel agent, only because the person is entitled to share, as a shareholder, in the income of the business of a travel agent that is a corporation</p>
<p>travel package</p>	<p>refers to the prearranged provision of a combination of activities, goods or services for one or more persons that includes at least two travel products (not including travel insurance). For the purposes of the travel package definition only, travel products may also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• food other than food provided with accommodation,</li> <li>• tourism activities,</li> <li>• translation and interpretation services,</li> <li>• visiting, or introductions to, retailers at a travel destination, and</li> <li>• visiting tourist attractions at a travel destination</li> </ul>