

The ears of IATA agents throughout the world must have been burning on 7-8 April, as various aspects of air ticket distribution under the IATA Programme were discussed at global level between airlines', IATA, GDSs' and agents' representatives including ECTAA. One of the many items discussed at the PAPGJC meeting were ADMs and how to improve airlines' filings in GDS. While no straightforward solution was found, the issues could be further developed in the framework of IATA's project to write up with stakeholders a value proposal to improve the Agency Programme generally. ECTAA is going to draw up a list of agents' priority issues for this purpose.

A positive outcome of the PAPGJC is that IATA will not pursue with the idea of global one-fit-all financial criteria. ECTAA will continue to actively monitor and contribute to IATA affairs.

Isabelle Leroy

Transport: White Paper on Transport

The European Commission adopted on the 28th of March a White Paper on Transport, which sets out a comprehensive strategy for a competitive transport system that will increase mobility, remove major barriers in key areas and fuel growth and employment whilst reaching the 60% emission reduction target by 2050.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 4 April or consult [White Paper](#)

Transport: Feasibility of a European multi-modal journey planner

The European Commission has launched a consultation on the feasibility of European and national multi-modal journey planners, which would identify a journey from location A to B using all modes of transport. Such an integrated tool could also include an end-to-end reservation and ticketing solution. Members are invited to provide us with their views by 12 May.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 8 April or see the [consultation document](#)

Air safety: Black list of unsafe carriers updated

The EU black list of carriers banned from operating in the EU has been updated and came into effect on 21 April 2011. Travel agents and tour operators have the obligation to bring the black list to the attention of the passenger.

For more details see e-mail sent on 20 April or consult the [updated black list](#)

IATA: Outcome of the PAPGJC/14 meeting

It was decided that the use of ADMs will be discussed in the next PAConf in view of recalling and clarifying existing rules to airlines. The Agency Administrator may act on a case-by-case basis when there is improper use of ADMs. IATA will look into removing the possibility that agents get debited of ADMs disputed within the latency period. Concerning ADMs on guaranteed fares, it was clarified that fare guarantees provided by GDSs are not recognized by airlines, thus a solution may require improving the whole tariff filing process.

Concerning IATA's project for a value proposal to improve the Agency Programme, airlines are interested in principle, provided that the scope is realistic. Travel agents will draw up their list of priority issues, in view of having a task force endorsed by the PAConf Steering Group.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 13 April

IATA: New IATA baggage rules came into effect on 1 April 2011

New IATA baggage rules came into effect on 1 April 2011. The rules determine which carrier's baggage provisions apply for an interline checked portion when the allowances and/or charges differ among booked carriers. The calculation should eventually be done automatically by the GDS, but some GDS are not ready yet for the new rules.

For more details, see e-mails sent on 28 and 31 March

DBC Regulation: Revision of Regulation 261/2004 scheduled in 2012

The Communication published on 11 April on the application of the Regulation 261/2004 foresees a revision of the Regulation in 2012, which may (i) review the obligation of airlines to provide unlimited care in exceptional circumstances (e.g. ash cloud), (ii) introduce new passenger rights to deal with airlines' flight rescheduling or no-show policies (related to sequential use of coupons) and (iii) clarify a number of grey areas, such as re-routing on other modes of transport.

For more details, see e-mail sent on the on 12 April or consult the [Communication](#)

PNR: Discussions on the PNR proposal have started

The Council has started discussions on the Directive proposal requiring carriers to transfer Passenger Name Records (PNR) to national authorities and the European Parliament has appointed a Rapporteur (UK) and Corapporteur (AU). Now is a good time to contact your national authorities and the Rapporteur/Corapporteur of the EP to raise ECTAA's issues identified in its common position. A model letter is available.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 29 March

Rail: Shaping the future of rail distribution

ECTAA/GEBTA are participating to the implementation of EU technical specifications for interoperability in the rail sector (TAP TSI), as this will have an impact on ticket vendors, who will have to fulfill these technical requirements when selling rail tickets. A project proposal for EU funding has been submitted to the EU, which –among other- aims at developing a plan for a 'full service model' which supports distribution/retailing between railways and third party ticket vendors for the future.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 22 March

Consumer rights: Ensuring optimal outcome of the negotiation for a first reading agreement

Members are invited to send a model letter to their national authorities highlighting which amendments of the EP and/or the Council they should support for an optimal solution for the travel trade.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 8 April

Recognition of professional qualifications: Possible case study on a professional card for tourist guide

In the framework of a Steering Group on a professional card, the European Commission is considering analysing the feasibility of a professional card for some specific professions, among other the profession of tourist guide. For reminder, if established, the professional card would aim to certify that a professional is lawfully established in a Member State and has certain professional qualification or experience, in order to facilitate his movement in another Member State either on a temporary basis or for establishment. ECTAA, together with ETOA, expressed provisional interest in working on such a case study.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 6 April

Consular protection: Launch of useful website on consular protection

As part of its Communication on the state of play and way forward in the field of consular protection for EU citizens in third countries, the Commission has launched a new dedicated website on consular protection, which provides information on the rights that citizens can claim under the EU rules on consular protection and gives access to contact details of consular and diplomatic missions of the various EU Members States in non-EU countries.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 30 March or see [Communication](#) and dedicated [website on consular protection](#)

VAT: Clarification of VAT rules

A Council implementing Regulation has been adopted which clarifies a number of provisions of the VAT Directive and in particular the new place of supply rules relating to certain tourism services. ECTAA/GEFTA managed to obtain an implementing measure which treats the supply of an intermediary of hotel accommodation for a corporate customer as an intermediary service, thereby avoiding multi-registration for VAT in numerous countries. This is an important facilitation measure for TMCs.

For more details, see e-mails sent on 28 March or consult [Regulation](#)

Environment: Best Environmental Management Practices in the tourism sector

In the frame of the new Regulation on Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS), the European Commission is in the process of elaborating the EMAS reference document on Best Environmental Management Practices (BEMP) in the tourism sector, with a special focus on accommodation, travel agents and tour operators. Members were invited to provide their feedback on this by 4 April. Some Members indicated that they are already involved in this process.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 22 March

Standardisation: Proposals for standardization of accommodation services

Two proposals for standardization of accommodation services in terms of quality and security management have been presented by the International Hotel and Restaurant Association, IHRA, and the Spanish standardization organization, AENOR and are now open for voting. Let us know by 4 May whether you support or oppose such standardization work.

For more details see e-mail sent on 19 April

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