

News release

Media Contact:
Sandy McLean, smclean@cambre-associates.com
+44 (0)7 786 601 771

ETTSA Welcomes EU Action on Financial Protection of Travellers

Brussels 30 November 2009: European policymakers are moving to clear up the confusion over the financial protection for consumers of travel products, according to ETTSA (European Technology & Travel Services Association).

“This week we’ve seen two separate initiatives, by the European Parliament and the Commission, to increase safeguards for travellers,” says ETTSA’s Secretary General Tom Parker. “On Wednesday, the Parliament adopted a resolution calling on the Commission to look at ways to guarantee passenger compensation and assistance when airlines go bankrupt. And the Commission launched a public consultation on the revision of the Package Travel Directive to address the main problems in existing package travel rules. Following our discussions with the Commission, ETTSA is pleased to see the Commission has included the risk of airline bankruptcies as a key factor for consideration.”

The Commission says that the internet and the emergence of low-cost airlines have “revolutionised the way in which consumers organise their holidays.” The protections in the 1990 Package Travel Directive do not necessarily cover travellers in these new circumstances.

“ETTSA agrees with the Commission that it’s time to revisit the Directive and clarify what protection consumers need and how that will be provided,” Parker states. “This is particularly urgent in the case of airline bankruptcies – a concern reflected by the European Parliament’s resolution. These days, airlines are just as likely to go bankrupt as tour operators. We welcome both the Parliament’s and the Commission’s action and look forward to participating in the consultation.”

ETTSA (the European Technology and Travel Services Association) was launched in 2009 to represent and promote the interests of travel distributors and Global Distribution Systems (GDS). Working with industry, policymakers, opinion formers, consumer groups and other relevant European stakeholders, the Brussels-based association encourages and supports fair competition and consumer choice in the travel distribution chain. Members include Amadeus, ebookers, Expedia, Opodo, Sabre (including its affiliate lastminute.com) and Travelport. Associate members include Booking.com and eDreams. www.etsa.eu