

News Release



1 October 2013

“Game changing” ATOL certificate celebrates first anniversary

Today (Tuesday 1 October) marks a year since the ATOL certificate was introduced, helping to put an end to consumer confusion about financial protection.

The ATOL Certificate was introduced in October last year to make it simple for consumers to know when their booking was ATOL protected. Any travel business selling ATOL protected trips must issue a certificate to the customer as soon as any payment is made – whether the booking is in person, online or over the phone.

Following a trade awareness campaign by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), the industry successfully implemented the certificate into their systems and an estimated 10 million certificates (covering around 20 million passengers) have been issued in the past 12 months.

During that time the certificate has been praised as a “game changer” by the Air Travel Insolvency Protection Advisory Committee (ATIPAC) and consumer awareness has grown to the point where around one in four people in the UK know about the certificate – despite it only existing for a year.

Richard Jackson, Director for Consumer Protection at the CAA, said:

“The ATOL certificate was brought in to put an end to consumer confusion about whether a booking was protected or not. We knew it would take a lot of hard work from the industry to bed it into their processes, but that hard work has paid off and consumers are now seeing the benefits.

“As awareness has grown, businesses are also benefiting from the certificate by using it to demonstrate to customers how their trip will be protected. We’re also aware that many customers are asking for the ATOL certificate when they make a booking, so there is a clear demand for it. It’s now crucial that travel businesses continue to issue certificates for all protected bookings and make it as easy as possible for consumers to know when they

PN7613

continued (1 of 2 pages)

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are protected, and who by.”

In addition to the trade awareness campaign, the ATOL certificate was also the centrepiece of the CAA’s Pack Peace of Mind consumer campaign in early 2013. As part of the campaign, consumers were directed to www.packpeaceofmind.co.uk for video content and visual guides to the ATOL certificate – reminding people to check for the certificate before making a booking. The CAA plans to run further promotional activity in early 2014.

Businesses not issuing ATOL certificates with protected bookings will be in breach of the ATOL Regulations 2012 and may face enforcement action.

For further media information please contact the CAA Press Office on: 020 7453 6030; press.office@caa.co.uk

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Notes to editors

1. Run by the UK Civil Aviation Authority on behalf of the Government, the Air Travel Organiser’s Licence (ATOL) scheme covers the traditional package holiday, some individual flights and since April 2012 holidays known by the industry as ‘Flight-Plus’. A ‘Flight-Plus’ booking is one that includes a flight plus accommodation and/or car hire, so long as these separate parts of the holiday are booked with the same company and within a day of each other.
2. For further information on how the ATOL scheme protects holidaymakers please visit www.packpeaceofmind.co.uk.
3. Follow [@packpeaceofmind](https://twitter.com/packpeaceofmind) on Twitter for further information and updates about ATOL protection.
4. People booking trips not covered by the ATOL scheme such as those without flights or holidays booked directly with airlines, should consider alternative methods of protection such as insurance or paying with their credit card.
5. The CAA is the UK’s specialist aviation regulator. Its activities include: making sure that the aviation industry meets the highest technical and operational safety standards; preventing holidaymakers from being stranded abroad or losing money because of tour operator insolvency; planning and regulating all UK airspace; regulating airports, air traffic services and airlines and providing advice on aviation policy from an economic standpoint.