

## Purpose of this consultation

The purpose of this document is to seek stakeholder views on the Travel Agent Guidance produced jointly by the CAA and OFT.

## Scope of the consultation

This consultation is aimed at travel agents, tour operators, airlines, travel industry trade associations and other interested parties, and is an opportunity to provide views and comments on the Travel Agent Guidance.

The guidance has been produced to bring together the CAA and OFT views on a range of applicable law in one document. Aviation-specific legislation is covered as well as general consumer protection law. The aim of producing the guidance is to help travel agents understand the range and scope of applicable legislation and to draw out the key principles that should cover their dealings with their customers.

There are two versions of the guidance. The full guidance document sets out each of the Regulations in detail, their requirements and the CAA and OFT's enforcement powers. There is also a short, quick reference version of the guidance. The CAA and OFT are seeking views on both versions of the guidance.

## Duration

The consultation will run from 15 November 2012 to 25 January 2013.

## Enquiries

If you have any queries regarding the content of this consultation please contact **either**;

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## How to respond

We would welcome your comments on both version of the guidance. In particular we would welcome comments on the questions set out below.

1. Do you consider that the Regulations set out in the guidance are appropriate?
2. Do you consider it's useful to have a detailed explanation of the Regulations set out in the long guidance or would it be more useful to limit the guidance to a practical explanation of their requirements?
3. Do you consider the examples of practices set out in the guidance help to clarify the requirements of the Regulations and help to make these requirements clear? In particular would you find more examples on unfair terms useful?

4. Do you consider there are examples of other practices that should be included in the guidance?
5. Do you think having a full version of the guidance and a short, quick reference version of it is helpful?
6. Do you consider the short version of the guidance is helpful for travel agents and other businesses?

Please send responses to the consultation by email to [tom.carpenter@caa.co.uk](mailto:tom.carpenter@caa.co.uk)

### **Additional ways to become involved**

The CAA and OFT plan to hold a roundtable event to take stakeholder views and invitations to this will be sent out following the launch of the consultation.

However, if you wish to meet the CAA and OFT team involved to discuss your views please contact Tom Carpenter or Nina Caplin (contact details above).

### **After the consultation**

After the consultation the OFT and CAA will decide whether any changes are necessary to the draft versions of the guidance and will then publish final versions of the guidance on both the CAA and OFT websites.

We will also publish a summary of responses received during the consultation.

### **Background**

The guidance has been developed following the CAA's work with airlines on price transparency. Following the airline work the CAA carried out an initial review of travel agent websites which indicated that it may be helpful to provide guidance for industry on the impact of both aviation specific and general consumer protection regulations. In light of this the CAA and OFT agreed to work together to produce the guidance. This has ensured that in addition to providing information on aviation specific Regulations we have been able to develop the guidance to include information on general consumer protection regulations and give a clear explanation of their requirements in relation to travel agent practices.

The OFT has also more recently taken enforcement action against certain airlines regarding their pricing practices, in particular with regards to payment surcharges.

In developing the draft guidance the CAA and OFT liaised closely with an industry working group, with members drawn from ABTA, AITO, AAC and TTA. The group were consulted throughout the development of the guidance and helped to frame the scope of the guidance. We also shared an early version of the guidance with the industry group and based on their advice developed the short, quick reference version of the guidance in addition to the full long version.