

..in five minutes..

11 March 2013

The European passenger rail industry has experienced a steady growth in passenger numbers over the last decade and is expected to grow further with the completion of new high-speed lines, the development of air-rail hubs and liberalization of international rail services (domestic services from 2019). There is an opportunity for travel agents and tour operators to tap into a market that has up till now been mainly a domestic market. One to recognize the importance of a strong alliance with the travel agency community is Trenitalia. You will recall that Trenitalia has joined ECTAA as Allied Member end of last year, with the primary aim of expanding its sales in foreign markets through agents. ECTAA is facilitating the contacts between Trenitalia and its Members. You may already have been contacted by the Italian carrier. Otherwise you are free to contact them directly; information on Trenitalia's services and contact details are available on a dedicated page of [ECTAA's website](#). Trenitalia offers travel agents a ticketless booking process and enables after-sales operations, such as changing tickets, at point of sale. The travel agents and tour operators should grab this opportunity!

*Christina Russe***IATA: Reminder - Identification of Travel Agencies in IATA's PaxIS and DDS Products**

Those Travel Agents, whose agent identity is currently revealed in PaxIS and DDS products, but who wish not to be identified in the future, need to inform IATA of their decision to opt out by 31 May 2013. Otherwise, their identification agreement will be automatically renewed for subsequent periods of one year.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 7 March 2013

IATA: ADM framework under the loop

IATA is launching an in depth analysis of the ADM dispute procedures in order to clarify applicable procedures. In order to prepare this review, Members have been invited to respond to a questionnaire on their main concerns with ADMs by 12 March 2013.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 15 February 2013

IATA: Has NDC been properly thought through by IATA?

Two representatives of IATA have made a presentation on the New Distribution Capability (NDC) developed and pushed by a small number of leading European airlines under IATA. The Air Matters Committee raised a number of issues, in particular putting in question the compatibility of such a standard with existing IATA Resolutions and functionalities, such as the Agency Programme, BSP, etc.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 21 February with minutes of the Air Matters Committee and the IATA presentation

Air transport: ECTAA position on air passenger rights revision

In view of the upcoming revision of the Regulation 261/2004 and Regulation 2027/97 on luggage incidents, Members as well as the delegates of the Air Matters and the Tour Operator Committees have been invited to provide their comments with a view to determining an ECTAA position. The proposal should be adopted by mid-March.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 8 February 2013

Air transport: Court says airlines must provide care even in extraordinary circumstances

In its decision handed down in the case C-12/11 on 31 January 2013, the ECoJ held that an air carrier must provide care to passengers, whose flight has been cancelled due to extraordinary circumstances such as the closure of airspace following the eruption of the Eyjafjallajökull volcano.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 4 February 2013 or consult the [ECoJ decision](#)

Air transport: Right to compensation in case of delay at arrival at final destination of connecting flights

In its judgement rendered in the case C-11/11 on 26 February 2013, the ECoJ held that a passenger travelling on directly connecting flights must be compensated when he has been delayed at departure for a period below the limits specified in Regulation 261/2004, but has arrived at his final destination at least three hours later than the scheduled arrival time.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 28 February 2013 or consult the [ECoJ decision](#)

Air transport: Airlines' baggage rules are raising concerns

KLM has recently decided to change its baggage policy, according to which it will be charging Economy Class passengers for check-in baggage on European flights booked as of 22 April 2013. ECTAA Members have been invited to share their views.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 1 March 2013

Consumer protection: ECTAA meets the consumer organisation regarding PTD revision

At the request of the European Consumer Organization, ECTAA met the BEUC on Wednesday 27 February to discuss the state of affairs concerning the revision of the Package Travel Directive. For the BEUC, a status quo of the existing PTD is not an acceptable option.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 28 February 2013

Consumer protection: Commission seeks CEOs' views on package travel Directive revision

On 31 January a meeting was held at the initiative of Vice President of the European Commission, Mrs Viviane Reding, to discuss the possible revision of the package travel Directive. The Commission is still examining the following three main options: (i) Revising the current legislation, (ii) leaving it as it is or (iii) repealing the existing Directive. A decision will be taken before the summer.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 6 February 2013

Professional qualifications: Better movement of tourist guides

On January 23rd 2013, the IMCO Parliamentary Committee voted its report on the Directive proposal on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications. The proof of two years' professional experience required for providing temporary services in another Member State does not apply where the service provider is accompanying the service recipients in the host country, as is the case for tour guides accompanying their group in another Member States. The IMCO Rapporteur is expected to enter in Trialogue with the European Council and the Commission by mid-March for final text.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 4 February 2013

Insurance mediation: EP Parliamentary Committees finalising their views

The draft report on Insurance mediation was discussed on January 21st in the European Parliament. The Rapporteur asked for the exclusion of travel insurances from the scope of the Directive. This position has been backed by the JURI Committee in its draft opinion. However, the opinion of the IMCO Committee insists on heavier obligations on travel insurance providers.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 28 January 2013

Data protection: EP is still working its way through the EU framework for data protection

The IMCO Parliamentary Committee has adopted an opinion on the General Data Protection Regulation proposal, which is rather favourable to the industry. Members have been invited to contact MEPs in the LIBE Parliamentary Committee, the lead Committee, to table amendments

similar to those contained in the IMCO opinion to avoid, among other, disproportionate obligations on businesses.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 4 February 2013

VAT: ECoJ hears Member States and Commission over scope of TOMS

A Hearing took place on 6 March on the 8 cases brought before the ECoJ concerning the incorrect application of the special VAT scheme for travel agents. The Commission was focusing essentially on a literal interpretation of the special scheme for travel agents, while Member States defended a large application of the scheme, insisting on the need to look at the broader context and objectives of the scheme. Next step: opinion of the Advocate General.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 11 March 2013

Tourism: Encouraging senior citizens to travel in Europe off-season

The Commission has launched an initiative that aims at promoting public-private partnerships to facilitate low season tourism through senior exchanges (i.e. agreements/actions between Member States to encourage their senior citizens to travel to the partner Member States). Members can contribute to this initiative.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 29 January 2013

Destination issues: Introduction of an eco-tax on car hire in the Balearic Islands

A new eco-tax on car rentals may be levied soon in the Balearic Islands. ECTAA has written to the Spanish authorities asking either the deferment of the implementation of the new tax, or alternatively that the tax should not apply to contracts already concluded and paid for prior to the introduction of the eco-tax. Members have been invited to write a similar letter.

For more details, see e-mails sent on 19 and 25 February 2013

Destination issues: Requirements for Indian visas cause concern

Concerns have been expressed in the Netherlands about the increasing difficulty of obtaining a tourist visa for India in terms of document requirements, online applications, interview requirements, etc. ECTAA will liaise with TAFI, the Indian Travel Agents' Association, on ways to remedy this situation.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 25 February 2013

Digital agenda: Travel agents and tour operators participating in the 112 European emergency number information campaign

ECTAA and its Members have been invited to join the EU campaign to raise awareness of the European emergency number 112, applicable throughout Europe, in case of need of emergency services: an ambulance, the fire brigade or the police. Travel Agents and tour operators are encouraged to promote the number on their websites, on e-tickets and at major tourist destinations.

For more details, see e-mail sent on 17 January and 8 February 2013 or consult the online [information campaign](#)

Other News in Brief

ECTAA is happy to welcome the arrival of our new colleague, Samuel Laurinkari, in replacement of Isabelle, who joined the European Commission. Samuel is a Finnish lawyer with an extensive experience in European Public Affairs and Competition. Before joining ECTAA, Samuel was Senior public affairs adviser at LVMH, the French Luxury Brand working on Competition and Intellectual Property. Previously, he was consultant in a Brussels based firm working on Competition, ICT and Intellectual Property.

Calendar of ECTAA meetings

12 March 2013	Tour Operators Committee, Brussels
15 March 2013	Fiscal Committee, Prague
17 April 2013	Legal Committee, Brussels
18 April 2013	Destination and Sustainability Committee, Athens
<i>May 2013</i>	<i>Incoming Tourism Working Group, tbc</i>