

3rd November 2011

Aviation Commission completes Travel Trade Licensing Renewals, effective 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011.

The Commission for Aviation Regulation (CAR) today 3rd November 2011 has announced the completion of the Autumn 2011 licensing round for tour operators and travel agents. The CAR received 113 valid travel agent applications and 50 valid travel agent applications. Overall 109 travel agent and 50 tour operator licences have now been issued from renewing applicants. 5 new travel agent and 3 new tour operator licences were also issued making the grand total of 114 travel agents and 53 tour operators now licensed.

The following travel agents have not renewed their licences:

Ethel Kelly trading as Unique Travel

DB Tours Ltd

Keycamp Holidays

Manasik Tours Ltd

The CAR is continuing to engage with these firms and licences may be issued in due course; if so, a notice will be placed on the CAR's website.

All of the above entities must cease to take any new bookings from 1 November 2011. Customers are advised that any new bookings made with the entities listed above will not be covered by the bonding scheme and passengers thus would have no right to repatriation from abroad or obtaining a refund on their unused travel arrangements.

CAR advised the travel trade in a notice of June 2011 of the timetable for the renewal of a licence. The licensing round opened in July with applicants expected to submit complete applications by mid-August 2011. The Commission undertook that it would aim to send decision letters by mid-September to applicants that had met the August application deadline. Finally, applicants who presented bonds to CAR by mid-October were assured to receive their licences by 31<sup>st</sup> October.

Alan Richardson, Manager Travel Trade Licensing stated *"We are pleased that 50 out of 50 renewing tour operators (100%) and 109 out of 113 (96%) of renewing travel agents met the licensing deadline. The total numbers including new applicants are 114 travel agents and 53 tour operators. This leaves 4 (four) travel agents not licensed as they have not provided a bond to the CAR. Customers are advised that if they make any new bookings with the unlicensed entities no bond cover is in place to effect repatriations or refund customers."*

All tour operators and travel agents offering for sale travel out of Ireland (whether based in Ireland or offering services from a remote internet site) are required by law to be licensed and bonded to buy or sell overseas travel originating in the State to destinations outside of Ireland. This is to ensure passenger repatriation in the event that a licence holder ceases trading when customers are abroad or to provide refunds where travel contracts are not fulfilled before the due date of travel. Any bookings made with an unlicensed entity are not protected by the bonding schemes operated by CAR.

For a complete list of licensed tour operators and travel agents, please see the CAR website at [www.aviationreg.ie](http://www.aviationreg.ie)

-ENDS-

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Notes to Editors:

1. Original timelines for completion of licences was as follows:

Date	Stage
15 August 2011	Deadline for receipt of completed licence application
12 September 2011	Date Commission to issue decision letters for on-time applications
17 October 2011	Deadline for receipt by Commission of applicant's bond
1 November 2011	New travel trade licence required

2. A licensing round was also undertaken in May 2011 for travel agents only.
3. All applications (renewals or new applications) are obliged to use the electronic licensing system introduced in September 2009.
4. Advisory note to passengers regarding travel agents and tour operators not in possession of a travel trade licence: CAR advises customers that tour operators and travel agents not in possession of an up to date valid licence from CAR should not transact any new bookings with such entities. They may however, pay outstanding balances of travel contracts entered into before 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011. Unlicensed tour operators and travel agents are not permitted to make any new travel arrangements for customers without a licence and bond having been put in place.
5. Role of CAR: CAR was established by the Aviation Regulation Act 2001 to provide economic regulation relating to passenger service charges at Dublin Airport and the aviation terminal service charges imposed by the Irish Aviation Authority (IAA). It is also responsible for the licensing of commercial aircraft for entities registered in Ireland and the approval of ground handlers at Dublin Airport. It also has responsibility for slot allocations for aircraft using Dublin Airport and for enforcing consumers' rights in air passenger rights and for persons with reduced mobility.