

2007

## By-laws – ABITO



Association of Belgian  
Incoming Travel Operators  
Brussels, 11/09/2007

## BY-LAWS OF A.B.I.T.O.

### ART.1 Constitution

The ASSOCIATION OF BELGIAN INCOMING TRAVEL OPERATORS (referred to as ABITO), founded in Antwerpen on April 11, 1986 as a *de facto* association, is today dissolved as per its by-laws.

The new Association is not responsible for any act, liabilities and their possible consequences of the former Association. The new Association re-created in Brussels on SEP. 11, 2007 under the same name, by the present officially licensed Belgian incoming travel agencies (definition, see page 6) and DMC's (definition, see page 6), considered as founder members (by alphabetical order)

- de*
- @dmire (*Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Events*)
  - AAB - All About Belgium
  - BCD *MEETINGS & INCENTIVES*
  - Brussels* Belgium International Travel Service
  - Belgian Travel House
  - Carlson Wagonlit
  - Hansa *Incoming*
  - MCI *Benelux NW/SA*
  - Mindstream *International*
  - ~~Tellus~~

The former association is reputed in good faith having no assets, no debts nor liabilities at the moment of the dissolution.

ABITO shall be governed by these by-laws which are approved by the General Assembly of the present founder members.

ABITO is a National organization and a *de facto* association, existing and acting in conformity with the Belgian laws.

### ART. 2 Objects

The objects of ABITO are:

- to create a community of interest, between Belgian incoming travel agencies and/ *or* including DMC's.
- to protect its members from non licensed competition
- to act as representative of its members at the Regional, National and International levels
- to establish relations for the benefit of the members with Regional, National and International governmental and non-governmental bodies which concern the profession of Incoming agent and/or Destination Management Companies.
- to dispatch promptly and equally to all members the leads which could arrive to the name of ABITO or without any specific name but obviously for a large distribution.
- to promote, in association with other similar associations of PCO's, events companies, hotels, etc., the best standards of hospitality in Belgium and the best image of professionalism in the destination.

-to be part of other associations or group of associations, national or international, sharing the same goals of hospitality and professionalism.

### **ART. 3 Code of Conduct**

ABITO is promoting the practice of good business ethics by its members. The members of ABITO are committed to deal honestly and fairly with each other, clients, providers of services, employees or employers, and with the general public.

Applicants for ABITO membership recognize the role of ABITO in providing a platform for professionalism, quality and business opportunities, and accept the responsibility to abide by and follow the Code of Ethics and the Rules & Regulations as proposed by ABITO.

### **ART. 4 Languages**

The official language of ABITO for meetings, communications between members, reports, etc., is English; but Dutch or French may be used as it may fit proper for better internal or external communication.

### **ART. 5 Members**

Active members **can only be official Travel Agencies** represented by her/his managing director or by one officially delegated representative. These Travel Agencies, to be active members, must fulfil the conditions of eligibility as stated in the Art. 6.

The quality of Allied Members can be given to any individual, company, association or other legal entity which is allied to those of incoming travel and destination management, and who is not in conflict with the interest of ABITO or any of its members.

The Allied members can participate at ABITO meetings by invitation only, but will have no power of vote.

### **ART. 6 Eligibility of Active Membership**

Any official Travel Agency recognised as such by the Belgian Law may apply for membership. This agency must meet all of the following standards required by ABITO:

- a. The agency must have an official license, delivered by the regional authorities of Belgium (Toerisme Vlaanderen or Commisariat Général au Tourisme).
- b. The agency is in existence for minimum of 2 years, and has to prove its regular activities as an incoming travel agency and/or DMC in Belgium.
- c. The agency has to promote internationally and pro-actively incoming travel into Belgium.
- d. The agency is a private commercial company, independent from Federal, Provincial, Regional or Municipal bodies and authorities.
- e. The applicant must meet the Code of Conduct as stated in Art. 3
- f. The applicant must pay the entrance fee and the annual fees as fixed by the General Assembly.

### **ART. 7 Application for Membership**

The applicant must submit his/her application in writing to ABITO for circulation to the members, including:

- a copy of the license
- documents proving the good standing of the company
- evidence of involvement in incoming travel in Belgium

The membership application will be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval by simple majority of members' votes.

### **ART. 8 Loss of Membership**

- a. Any member may resign by sending its resignation in a registered letter to the Executive Committee represented by the President, with immediate effect.
- b. A member may lose his/her membership in the following cases:
  - he/she is no longer working as incoming agency or DMC
  - he/she acts in contradiction with the Code of Conducts (Art. 3)
  - the fees fixed by the General Assembly have not been paidThe loss of membership will be submitted to the entire membership and decision will be by simple majority of votes.
- c. A member may lose automatically and irrevocably his/her membership in case he/she no longer fulfils the art. 6 of the present by-laws.
- d. A member who lost his membership may apply for a new one at any time, provided he/she meets again all the conditions of membership.

### **ART. 9 Management of ABITO**

- a. ABITO is governed by its General Assembly, composed by all the Active Members.
- b. The day to day management is given by the General Assembly to an Executive Committee composed by the President, the President-Elect, and any other officer as deemed necessary for the management of the Association.
- c. The General Assembly decides where ABITO is officially located: physical and e-mail addresses.

### **ART. 10 Powers**

The General Assembly meets physically at least once a year, at a date fixed by the Executive Committee. The General Assembly elects its Executive Committee for maximum 2 years, with yearly re-election.

All financial acts of the Association must be signed by 2 officers of the Executive Committee.

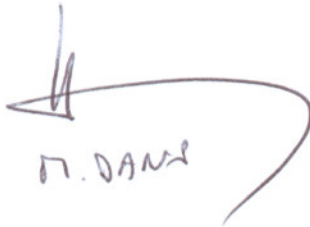
The General Assembly has the supreme and final power of the Association, to elect its representatives, to fix any type of fees and take any decision in the interest of ABITO, or for the achievement of its objectives. The decisions are taken with a simple majority of votes, except in the cases where a special majority is fixed by the present by-laws. With a tie of votes, the president's vote will be counted double.

**ART. 11 Dissolution**


ABITO may be dissolved by the General Assembly on a 2/3 majority vote. Any debts and liabilities will be covered by the assets of ABITO, if any, or in the absence of assets by the Active members on an equally shared basis, provided that these financial acts have been performed as described in Article 10.


Made in Brussels, the 11<sup>th</sup> of September, 2007


Signatures of founding members:


  
M. DAMS  
BITS

  
AAB - ALL ABOUT BELGIUM

  
FUNDSTRAAT INTERNATIONAL  
E. THIRY

  
M. Deswaene  
honor Incoming

  
Colmine (meetings, Incentives  
Conferences, Events)

MOTI GOLDMAN  
BTH  


  
H. SLIMBROECK  
MCI Benelux NV/SA

  
08 OCT. 2007  
Patrick Culot  
Director

Byg MEETINGS & INCENTIVES

## Addendum: definitions

### What is a DMC?

The local **D**estination **M**anagement **C**ompanies (DMCs) are first of all service providers, who are constantly searching for new ways to pleasantly surprise the visitors and seize every opportunity to highlight the qualities of a destination.

A DMC (Destination Management Company) provides management of a **ground service** based on local knowledge of their destination. For example: Meet and Greet, Transfers / Transportation, Hotel Accommodation, Restaurants, Activities, Excursions, Conference Venues, Themed Events, Gala Dinners and Logistics, as well as helping with overcoming language barriers.

A DMC must be **someone to relate too and trust** to ensure teamwork, being both creative and professional. DMC's are often able to provide preferential rates based on the buying power they have with their preferred suppliers. To them, objectivity is of paramount importance. Good DMCs always try to be creative: they introduce new ideas, develop new products and themes and offer the customer that tiny bit more.

Local DMCs are real **ambassadors** for their country, who operate separately from official authorities. They are in the ideal position to make supply meet demand. The DMCs have the duty to co-ordinate the various services that the customer wishes to use and are their only contact. They also analyze and evaluate the reputation of the various suppliers and the services rendered.

The above is only a basic overview of the services a DMC provides.

### What is an Incoming Travel Agency?

An Incoming Travel Agency is a travel agency working professionally on incoming business to its destination, but not as its core business, and without necessarily promoting the destination abroad.