



THE EUROPEAN TRAVEL AGENTS'
AND TOUR OPERATORS' ASSOCIATIONS

PRESS RELEASE

Improving knowledge of holidaymakers' rights

The failure of the Thomas Cook Group last week was of unheard magnitude in the industry over the last 30 years. All the attention is still currently directed towards bringing back holidaymakers stranded abroad. Despite the very large number of travellers concerned, the guarantee system established in accordance with the Package Travel Directive is proving to be efficient.

At the same time, the guarantee funds have already notified the establishments where holidaymakers are currently being accommodated that the costs of their stay will be covered. That, in some places, holidaymakers have been asked to pay for the services included in the package they already paid by the customer to the tour operator is not acceptable and detrimental to a smooth repatriation operations. Hotels concluded commercial agreements with Thomas Cook to provide accommodation to its customers. Provisions of the contracts are therefore solely binding for the parties to the contract, i.e. the hotel and Thomas Cook.

Pawel Niewiadomski, President of ECTAA said: "The difficulties encountered by hotels are real, however, in no circumstances can the obligations of these contracts be passed on to the travellers. Improving the knowledge of hotel owners and managers about European legislation, the Package Travel Directive in that case, in destinations outside the European Union should be a priority".

There are no doubts that the impact of this bankruptcy will have a significant knock-on effect for the actors of the tourism industry in Europe in the coming weeks and months. ECTAA is already assessing the consequences of the failure of Thomas Cook together with the national associations of travel agents and tour operators, the stakeholders in the tourism industry and European institutions in order to draw lessons from this dramatic failure.

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ECTAA regroups the national associations of travel agents and tour operators of 30 European countries, of which 27 are within the European Union, and represents some 70.000 enterprises. It also has four International Members from Israel, Malaysia, Morocco and Tunisia.

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