



## **Coordinated and evidence-based measures are necessary against COVID-19 outbreak says the global travel agency community**

***The COVID-19 pandemic is a public health issue requiring proportionate and fact-based measures that are made on the latest public health recommendations from experts around the world. Travel restrictions, while understandably necessary at this moment in time, must be carefully evaluated so as to ensure they do not go beyond what's required to control the spread of the virus causing excessive reductions in international travel, currently at an all-time low.***

**Brussels. 17 March 2020.** For the travel and tourism industry, the safety of the traveling public, guests and employees is of the utmost importance. The World Travel Agents Associations Alliance ([WTAAA](http://www.wtaaa.com)) representing 67 countries and markets around the world and the global voice of the travel agency community, is fully supporting bonafide international scientific institutions as they work closely with all countries affected by the current health emergency.

The “raison d’être” for travel agencies and tour operators everywhere is to facilitate trusted, value-add business and leisure travel planning for travellers universally. While the final impact of the Covid-19 outbreak cannot yet be assessed, the damages in the travel industry are already immense. From all parts of the world, alarming reports continue to flood in: business and leisure travel is on hold, jobs are at stake, the future appears grim.

Mark Meader, Chairman of the WTAAA indicates, “Our industry is mindful of a guiding principle that long predates this current public health calamity: without traveller safety, security and confidence, there can be no travel. This safety and security must be based on rational and fact-based decisions that allow travel of any kind to quickly recover in a logical and safe way.”

While business and leisure travel are being gravely impacted, if not shattered, today, both are ideally positioned to again be a prime factor in driving the recovery of the world economy. However, the agency community is in the midst of a liquidity crisis never experienced before. Without cash, agencies are on the brink of failure. Meader goes on to say, “The travel agency community - the trusted enablers of travel - must now be provided clear financial and economic support at national and regional levels in order for the recovery of not just the travel sector, but economies around the world.” The WTAAA and its member associations remain steadfast in their commitment to safe and secure travel for all and can be relied upon by the agency community globally to serve as their advocate every step of the way.

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About [WTAAA](#):

The mission of the World Travel Agents Associations Alliance (WTAAA) is to act as the global travel agency voice through the exchange of ideas and information. WTAAA members include the American Society of Travel Advisors (ASTA), Association of Canadian Travel Agencies (ACTA), Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA), Association of Brazilian Travel Agents (ABAV), European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations (ECTAA), Association of South African Travel Agents (ASATA), Spanish Federation of Travel Agencies (CEAV), Federation of ASEAN Travel Associations (FATA), Latin American Tourism Forum (FOLATUR), Korea Association of Travel Agents (KATA), Society of IATA Passenger Agents (SIPA), Travel Agency Federation of India (TAFI) and Travel Agents' Association of New Zealand (TAANZ).