

**PRESS RELEASE FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TOUR MANAGERS
AND THE EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF TOURIST GUIDE ASSOCIATIONS**

As a result of frequent confusion between our two professions, **IATM** and **FEG** have found it necessary to issue the following mutually agreed and widely accepted professional definitions as requested by the relevant European Community institutions.



A tour operator will organise, package and sell a tour, which may last from 2 days, and may exceed 40 days in duration. In order to have a company "representative" physically present throughout this package they usually contract persons to travel with the group, referred to as

"Professional Tour Managers" in their brochures. This title derives from the services for which an experienced person is required, and whose main source of income is from tour managing.

Responsibilities and duties of the professional Tour Manager:

1. To manage and supervise the pre-established itinerary, ensuring the programme is carried out in its entirety as described in the company's literature and sold to the consumer.
2. To ensure that the **standards** and **quality** of all services included in the price of the package are maintained and that they are rendered efficiently and punctually.
3. To care for the well-being, comfort and safety of each individual on the tour.
4. To give all necessary help to any group in difficulty or in an emergency.
5. To furnish the group with **background information** "en route" covering general ethnic, geographic, historic and socio-economic aspects of each country visited and customs and local practical information.
6. To be aware of the procedures regarding passports, visas, banking, hospitalisation, visitor's rights, insurance reports, as well as customs, local and police regulations as applicable in each country visited.

Duties include: Administration and accounts; confirmation and co-ordination of all package services such as transport, accommodation, restaurants, entertainments, and liaison with **Tourist Guides** for local sight-seeing; check-in and luggage control; provision of bulletins detailing timetables for activities.

Qualification and skills required include, in addition to the knowledge required for the above: ability to communicate with both clients and suppliers; a knowledge and understanding of personalities and needs of the traveller in a foreign country; and a responsible attitude to both people and the environment.

The **Professional Tour Manager** is the on-the-spot, responsible contact between Consumer, Supplier and Tour Operator.

Both Associations are sure that for Europe to maintain and increase its share of world tourism emphasis must be placed on **Quality of Service** and **Professionalism**. Therefore it would be clearly advantageous for all visitors, particularly package tour groups, to benefit from the services of **Tourist Guides** who are unofficial ambassadors for their specific areas as are **Tour Managers** for all the countries that may be visited. We hope that moves to enhance Consumer Protection in the European Community will ensure that visitors are not provided with the services of incompetent, unqualified persons to the detriment of the future development of Tourism. Owing to the very diverse provision in various member states, **I.A.T.M. and F.E.G.** have formulated proposals for new Community standards governing our professions with suitable homogenous criteria for all states. Entrance to our professions based upon standardised selection processes and uniform levels of final qualification provides quantifiable service for tourist (consumer) protection.



In order to ensure that visitors are provided with knowledgeable and welcoming Tourist Guides, all EEC countries have made educational provision and/or legislation - some as long ago as the 19th century and others in the post war years. Since the 1950s the major European heritage sites and monuments have been interpreted by Tourist Guides qualified by examinations organised/recognised by the relevant regional or national Tourist Authority.

Responsibilities and duties of Tourist Guides:

1. To carry out guided tours as requested by clients or specified in clients' brochures paying careful attention to schedules and itineraries.
2. To create a friendly rapport, meeting particular client requirements, whether for the large package tour group or the smaller special interest parties.
3. To observe current agreed codes of professional conduct.

The Tourist Guide's main role is to guide groups or individual visitors from abroad or from the home country around the monuments, sites and museums of a city or region; to interpret in an inspiring and entertaining manner, in the language of the visitor's choice, the cultural and natural heritage and environment.

The Tourist Guide **Qualification** requires:

Wide general knowledge with specific reference to the history, geography, art & architecture, economics, politics, religion and sociology of the area of qualification.

Specialised linguistic knowledge with all languages spoken fluently including the specialist terminology in many fields.

Interpersonal skills, selection of knowledge and communication techniques which comprise The Art of Guiding.

The Tourist Guides' **job description** is as follows:

In-depth environmental interpretation. The Tourist Guide is the well-informed intermediary between the latest research in many subject areas and the various levels of tourist demand and interest.

Operation in a clearly defined cultural / geographical area is necessitated by the breadth and depth of knowledge required along with the associated practical skills and itinerary planning. Developments in many fields are so rapid as to require frequent update study and ongoing professional training at a level that can at most encompass an area equivalent to one of the smaller EEC member states.