

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

**GUIDELINES FOR RECOGNITION / RENEWAL AS AN APPROVED
INBOUND TOUR OPERATOR**

[Revised with effect from 4th December 2009]

1. The aims and objectives of the scheme for recognition of Inbound Tour Operator are to encourage quality standard and service in this category so as to promote tourism in India and abroad. This is a voluntary scheme open to all bonafide tour operators to bring them in organized sector.
2. **Definition:** An Inbound tour operator is one who makes arrangements for transport, accommodation, sight seeing, entertainment and other tourism related services for foreign tourists.
3. The application for **recognition** shall be addressed to the Additional Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Transport Bhawan, 1, Parliament Street, New Delhi - 110 001.
4. The **recognition** as an approved Inbound Tour Operator shall be granted by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, New Delhi initially, for five years, based on the **Inspection Report / Recommendations** of a Committee comprising of **concerned Regional Director and a member of IATO**.
5. The application for **renewal/extension** shall be addressed to the Regional Director of the concerned region as per the following addresses:-
 - a) The Regional Director (East), India Tourism, "Embassy", 4, Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkata – 700 071, West Bengal. Phone No. (033) 2282 5813 / 2282 1475, Fax: (033) 2282 3521, Email: indtour@cal2.vsnl.net.in
 - b) The Regional Director (West), India Tourism, 123, M. Karve Road, Opp. Church Gate, Mumbai – 400 020, Maharashtra. Phone No. (022) 2208 3263 / 2207 4333 / 2207 4334, Fax: (022) 2201 4496, Email: indiatourism@hathway.com, indiatourism@vsnl.com
 - c) The Regional Director (North), India Tourism, 88 – Janpath, New Delhi 110 001. Phone No. (011) 2332 0342 / 2332 0005 / 2332 0008, Fax: (011) 2332 0109, Email: goitodelhi@nic.in
 - d) The Regional Director (South), India Tourism, 154, Anna Salai, Chennai – 600 002, Tamil Nadu. Phone No. (044) 2846 0285 / 2846 1459, Fax: (044) 2846 0193, Email: indtour@vsnl.com, goitochn@tn.nic.in
 - e) The Regional Director (North – East), India Tourism, Asom Paryatan Bhawan, 3rd Floor, Near Nepali Mandir, A. K. Azad Road, Paltan Bazar, Guwahati – 781 008, Assam. Phone No. (0361) 273 7554, Fax No. (0361) 273 7553, Email: indtourguwahati@nic.in
6. The renewal / extension, thereafter, shall be granted for five years after inspection conducted by a Committee comprising of concerned Regional Director and a member of IATO, on an application made by the Tour Operator along with the requisite fee / documents.

7. The documents received from applicants after scrutiny in all respects will be acknowledged by the Travel Trade Division in respect of first approval and by the concerned Regional Director for renewal. The inspection for first approval / renewal shall be conducted by the Inspection Team within a period of sixty working days from the receipt of complete application.

8. The following conditions must be fulfilled by the Inbound Tour Operator for grant of recognition / renewal by Ministry of Tourism:

- i) The application for grant of recognition / renewal shall be in the prescribed form and submitted in duplicate along with the required documents.
- ii) The Inbound Tour operators located in rest of India should have a minimum Paid up Capital (or Capital employed) of **Rs.3.00 lakh** and **Rs. 50,000/-** in the case of North – Eastern region, remote and rural areas, duly supported by the latest Audited Balance Sheet/Chartered Accountant's certificate.
- iii) The turn-over in terms of foreign exchange earnings by the firm from inbound tour operations only during the preceding financial year or calendar year should be a minimum of **Rs. 25.00 lakh** for rest of India and **Rs. 5.00 lakh** for the North – Eastern region, remote and rural areas duly supported by Chartered Accountant's certificate. However, for the North – Eastern Region, the Chartered Accountant's Certificate regarding turn – over of the firm in Rupee earnings would be treated as Foreign Exchange earnings, provided there is documentary evidence that such earnings are from inbound tour operations only.
- iv) The Inbound Tour operator should have an office under the charge of the owner or a full time member of their staff, who is adequately trained / experienced in matters regarding transport, accommodation, currency, customs regulations and general information about tourism and travel related services. However, greater emphasis may be given to effective communication skills and knowledge of foreign language other than English.

There should be a minimum of four qualified staff out of which at least one should have Diploma / Degree in Tourism & Travel Management from a recognized University, IITTM or an institution approved by AICTE. The owner of the firm would be included as one of the qualified employees.

The academic qualifications may be relaxed in case of the other two staff members who are exceptionally experienced personnel in Airlines, Shipping, Transport, PR Agencies, Hotels and other corporate bodies and those who have two years experience with Ministry of Tourism approved tour operators.

For the agencies located in the North – Eastern region, remote and rural areas, there should be a minimum of two staff out of which one should be a qualified employee with a Diploma / Degree in Tourism & Travel Management from a recognized University, IITM or an institution approved by AICTE. The owner of the firm would be included as one of the qualified employees.

- v) The Inbound Tour Operator should have been in operation for a minimum period of one year before the date of application.
 - vi) The minimum office space should be at least **150 sq. ft for rest of India and 100 sq. ft for hilly areas which are above 1000 meters from sea level.** Besides, the office may be located in neat and clean surroundings and equipped with telephone, fax and computer reservation system etc. There should be sufficient space for reception and easy access to toilets.
 - vii. The Inbound Tour operator should be an income tax assessee and should have filed Income Tax Returns for the last or current assessment year.
 - viii. **Disclaimer:** The Inbound Tour Operator should employ only Regional Level Guides trained and licensed by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and State Level Guides approved by the State Governments. The implementation of this clause would be subject to the decision of Hon'ble High Court of Rajasthan in Writ Petition No. 5607 / 2004 and other Hon'ble Courts.
 - ix. The Inbound Tour Operator shall contract / use approved specialized agencies in the field of adventure options and related services for the tourists
9. The inbound tour operator will be required to pay a non - refundable fee of **Rs.3, 000/-** while applying for the recognition and renewal of Head Office as well as each Branch Office. The fee will be made payable to the Pay & Accounts Officer, Ministry of Tourism in the form of a Bank Draft.
10. The recognition / renewal will be granted to the Head Office of the Domestic Tour Operator. Branch offices will be approved along with the Head Office or subsequently, provided the particulars of the Branch offices are submitted to Ministry of Tourism for recognition and for renewal to the concerned Regional Director and accepted by it.
11. The Inbound Tour Operator so granted recognition / renewal shall be entitled to such incentives and concessions as may be granted by the Government from time to time and shall abide by the terms and conditions of recognition as prescribed from time to time by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.
12. Even though the scheme of granting approval of recognition to service providers of Travel Trade is voluntary, in nature, there is a need to have a pro - active role of Ministry of Tourism and Travel Trade to ensure that more and more

service providers seek approval and then service the tourists. There is also a need to educate the stakeholders as well as consumers against the potential risk of availing services through the unapproved service providers.

13. It shall be mandatory for an approved service provider of Travel Trade to prominently display the Certificate of approval of recognition given by Ministry of Tourism in the office by pasting it on a board or in a picture frame so that it is visible to a potential tourist.

14. The decision of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India in the matter of recognition / renewal shall be final. However, MOT may in their discretion refuse to recognize / renew any firm or withdraw / withhold at any time recognition / renewal already granted with the approval of the Competent Authority. Before such a decision is taken, necessary Show Cause Notice would invariably be issued and the reply considered on merit. This will be done after careful consideration and generally as a last resort. Circumstances in which withdrawal is effected would also be indicated.

15. The guidelines including application form may be downloaded from website www.tourism.gov.in

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Kavita / 04.12.2009

**APPLICATION FORM FOR RECOGNITION / RENEWAL AS AN APPROVED
INBOUND TOUR OPERATOR**



1. Name of the Organization
 Address of Head office.....

 Telephone Numbers.....
 Fax Numbers.....
 Email Address.....
 Website Name.....
 Address of the Branch offices (if any).....

 (Please fill up separate application form, in duplicate for Branch Office(s), if any)

2. Nature of the Organization (Proprietary concern, Partnership or
 Incorporation)
 Year of registration/commencement of business (with documentary proof)

3. Name of Proprietor/ Partners/ Directors/ etc.
 Details of their interests, if any
 In other business may also be indicated.....

4. Particulars of staff employed:

Name	Designation	Qualifications	Experience	Salary	Length of Service with the firm
I.
II.
III.
IV.

5. Details of office premises (Documentary proof / Rent Agreement /
 Ownership Deed to be made available) - Space in sq. ft.....
 Location area (please tick mark the right category) commercial residential
 Reception area..... ..Accessibility to toilets (Please write Yes or No).....

6. Name of Bankers (please attach a reference letter on original letterhead
 from your Bankers)

7. Name of Auditors
- A Balance-Sheet and Profit & Loss Statement pertaining to the inbound tour operation business, as prescribed under Company Law, must be submitted by each applicant. These audited statements should be in respect of your establishment for the last completed financial year or for the calendar year immediately preceding the date of submission of your application. Also furnish details of your turnover in the following statement:-

Particulars of the Inbound Tour Operator concerned

- a) Paid up Capital (Capital employed).....
- b) Loans:
- i) Secured
- ii) Unsecured
- c) Reserves.....
- d) Current liabilities and provisions
- e) Total **(a to d)**:
- f) Fixed assets (excluding intangible assets)
- g) Investment
- h) Current assets
- i) Intangible Assets
- j) Total (f to i)

Notes:

- i) Intangible assets should include goodwill preliminary expenses, tenancy and business rights, deferred revenue expenditure, accumulated loss etc.
- ii) Reserves should include balance of Profit & Loss Account and exclude taxation reserve.
- iii) Current liabilities and provisions would include taxation reserve.
- iv) Current assets should include sundry debts, loans advances, cash and bank balance.
8. A copy of Acknowledgement in respect of Income tax returns for the current assessment year should be enclosed
9. Certificate of Chartered Accountant in original regarding turn over through Foreign Exchange from Inbound Tour Operations only for the preceding or latest year.....
10. Documents pertaining to any promotional activities undertaken by the firm should be enclosed.....
11. Please indicate membership of International Travel Organizations, if any

12. Give details of:
- a) Volume of international tourist traffic handled. (Please submit a certificate from a Chartered Accountant). This certificate should show the foreign exchange earnings receipts from inbound tour operations only during the current financial year or the year immediately preceding the date of submission of your application.
 - b) Clientele: special tourist groups handled, if any, their size, frequency, etc.
 - c) Steps taken to promote international tourist traffic and details of the groups handled, if any.
 - d) Special programmes if any, arranged for foreign tourists.
 - e) Please attach publicity material such as brochures / folders / leaflets / posters concerning itineraries and website address of the agency.

13. Number of conferences handled, if any, and the details of total number of passengers for such conferences with details of locations, etc.

14. Number of incentive tours handled.

15. Please enclose Demand Draft of Rs. 3,000/- for Head Office and Rs. 3, 000/- for each Branch Office as fee for recognition / renewal payable to the Pay & Accounts Officer, Ministry of Tourism.

For Head Office, please mention:

Demand Draft No.....

Date.....

Amount

For Branch office(s), please mention:

Demand Draft No.....

Date.....

Amount

Signature of Proprietor/Partner/Managing Director

Rubber Stamp

Place:

Date:

NOTE:

- I. The guidelines including application form may be downloaded from website www.tourism.gov.in
- II. This application should be submitted in duplicate along with all supporting documents.
- III. Please quote reference number of Ministry of Tourism if the application is for renewal of recognition.
- IV. Separate application form to be filled in duplicate along with the required documents, when applying for Branch Office(s).

LIST OF DOCUMENTS (CHECK LIST) REQUIRED FOR FIRST APPROVAL/ RENEWAL AS AN APPROVED INBOUND TOUR OPERATOR

1. Application form in duplicate duly filled in.
2. Two attested photographs pasted on both the copies of application form.
3. Documentary proof (preferably registration certificates from Government) in support of beginning of operations of your firm.
4. A copy of Complete Audited Balance Sheet for the latest financial year.
5. Income Tax Acknowledgement for the latest assessment year.
6. Service Tax Registration number from the concerned authority.
7. The Inbound Tour operators located in rest of India should have a minimum Paid up Capital (or Capital employed) of Rs.3.00 lakh and Rs. 50,000/- in the case of North – East region, remote and rural areas, duly supported by the latest Audited Balance Sheet/Chartered Accountant's certificate.
8. Reference letter from Bank on its letterhead (in original) regarding your firm's bank account.
9. Details of staff employed giving names, designation, educational qualification & experience if any, in tourism field, and length of service in your organization (copies of certificates to be enclosed):
 - a) There should be a minimum of four qualified staff out of which at least one should have Diploma / Degree in Tourism & Travel Management from a recognized University, IITTM or an institution approved by AICTE. The owner of the firm would be included as one of the qualified employees.
 - b) The academic qualifications may be relaxed in case of the other two staff members who are exceptionally experienced personnel in Airlines, Shipping, Transport, PR Agencies, Hotels and other corporate bodies and those who have two years experience with Ministry of Tourism approved tour operators.
 - c) For the agencies located in the North – Eastern region, remote and rural areas, there should be a minimum of two staff out of which one should be a qualified employee with a Diploma / Degree in Tourism & Travel Management from a recognized University, IITTM or an institution approved by AICTE. The owner of the firm would be included as one of the qualified employees.
10. List of Directors/Partners or name of the Proprietor.
11. Details of office premises, whether located in commercial or residential area, exact office space in sq. ft. (at least 150 sq. ft for rest of India and 100 sq. ft for hilly areas which are located above 1000 meters from sea level) and accessibility to toilet and reception area.
12. Certificate of Chartered Accountant on original letter head in support of turnover in foreign exchange from inbound tour operations only during the last financial / calendar year which should not be less than Rs. 25.00 Lakh in case of Inbound Tour Operator from rest of India and Rs. 5.00 lakh from the North – Eastern Region, remote and rural areas. However, for the North – Eastern Region, the Chartered Accountant's Certificate regarding turn – over of the firm in Rupee earnings would be treated as Foreign Exchange earnings, provided there is documentary evidence that such earnings are from inbound tour operations only.
13. Demand Draft for Rs. 3,000/- towards processing fees payable to Pay and Accounts Officer, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.
14. Documents duly attested by competent officer.

NOTE:

- I. The above - mentioned documents may be submitted in duplicate.
- II. Please fill up separate application form(s), in duplicate, for Branch Office(s), if any.
- III. The guidelines including application form may be downloaded from website www.tourism.gov.in
