

NOVEMBER 2009



ANTOR MEET THE MEDIA EVENT



1st October was the date for another hugely successful ANTOR Meet the Media event. The event was held at Canada House, Trafalgar Square, London and 34 destinations participated and well over 100 members of the travel media attended from the BBC, Telegraph, Times, Mail on Sunday, Independent, Metro etc to Travel Weekly, TTG, Wanderlust, Conde Nast etc to freelance travel journalists.

During the night, Tracey Poggio, Chairman ANTOR delivered the following speech:

“On behalf of ANTOR, I’d like to welcome you here this evening for our annual meet the media event.

Firstly, special thanks to all of our sponsors tonight, who I am delighted to say are many - Tourism Canada for use of this very engaging venue, Tourism Fiji, The Network, BP Marketing, the TTG and Travel Mole.

As Tourist Board’s we value all of our media partners who remain an immediate route to business.

ANTOR has been active over the past year in drawing our members together for a variety of activity and debate. Much needed, in this perhaps one of the most challenging years I can remember for this industry, with both swine flu and a worldwide recession impacting seriously on our destinations.

The camaraderie and support shown between our countries, the pool of experience in crisis management, destination marketing and industry knowledge that we share, make it clearer than ever, why this Association continues to grow in stature.

As we head towards 2010 we face yet further challenges and not least of all those inflicted by the UK Government. Increased Air Passenger Duty (APD) is in these troubled commercial times, the most unjust of taxes, which will further damage the travel industry and not least of all, set back developing regions such as the Caribbean and Africa whose economies have long come to depend on tourism.

Perhaps everyone in this room is aware of the longer term implications of APD, but it is the potential traveller who will feel the immediate brunt of this tax and who we at ANTOR believe remain oblivious as to what it all means.

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Essentially, over the course of this next year, passengers leaving the UK will pay an increased levy of up to 113%. In monetary terms, to cite an example, this can equate to a rise from £80 to £170 on a business class ticket to Australia or the Americas.

The argument is that this is a green tax and yet still there isn't a shred of evidence to illustrate the potential £2billion raised is being deployed towards sustainable or environmental projects.

ANTOR says no to this taxation, no to APD.

So what can we do? The travel industry is doing much to link arms in protest, but for the journalists among us here today, you can help this industry by writing about it and driving your readers to appeal to local Government and object in every way possible against this tax. ANTOR is to start a petition on our website but also where possible encourage people to write to their local MP to object.

Of course the world of travel is not all doom and gloom, far from it. Tonight, the ANTOR globe is represented by 34 countries from around the world. As Tourist Boards there isn't much we can't tell you about our countries, our customs, our hot spots, diving, fishing, skiing, weddings cruising, water sports, adventure travel, you name it we sell it.

Tourist Boards are often undervalued in the service they provide both to industry and the public and yet we are here as a constant source of unbiased and professional information and fact.

Many of you I know are in regular contact with our secretariat to distribute media requests to our members directly, but you can also obtain updated information on all of our members on our website www.antor.com

A final thanks tonight to Esther and our Board of Directors who have worked over the year to make events such as this a success.

Before I leave you to drink, eat and mingle, my closing message to you is that a tourist board is not just about a brochure and a restaurant list, there is very little insider knowledge on our countries that we don't have and it's all impartial, so I urge you to use the opportunity tonight to meet the experts and to discover what every member has to offer by way of new and exciting ideas.

So thank you all for coming and enjoy the evening, good night.

ANTOR JOINS FORCES WITH TELEGPAPH TO LOBBY AND PROTEST AGAINST THE APD

During the course of this year ANTOR has been campaigning vigorously against the introduction of the APD. The Telegraph has taken a lead in the campaign and recently published the following article:

The first of two increases in Air Passenger Duty (APD) comes into effect on November 1. Under a new four-tier banding system (based on the distance from London to the destination's capital city), the duty in economy class will rise from £10 to £11 per person on short-haul flights, from £40 to £45 or £50 on medium-haul flights, and from £40 to £55 on long-haul flights. Prices for passengers in premium-economy cabins will rise by up to £30. Next November, the increases will be even steeper.

The tax – originally presented as an environmental measure – will penalise not the well-off business traveller who flies on private jets but the ordinary British holidaymaker on a well-earned break.

APD has united the travel industry in unprecedented fashion. Airlines, cruise lines, airports, tour operators and environmental groups all see it as misguided and misleading. They argue that it will be damaging for travel, tourism, business, the economy and the environment.

The Daily Telegraph shares that view. Today we begin a campaign for APD to be scrapped. We hope you will join us by signing our petition, which we plan to present to both the Government and the main opposition parties.

Ten reasons why APD must be abolished:

1 Disproportionate increase

In 2004 the Government imposed APD at £5 for short-haul flights and £20 for long-haul flights. In that time, airlines have improved the efficiency of their fleets, yet the Government's response has been to raise the tax on flights by up to 425 per cent. This comes as the travel industry is having to contend with rising fuel prices, the recession and a weak pound. The International Air Transport Association reports that, globally, airlines lost \$17 billion last year. When the biggest increases in duty are due, next November, some airlines may not be around to see them.

2 Private jets exempt

While travellers on commercial aircraft have to pay the tax, passengers on private jets do not. In other words, Roman Abramovich, Sir Philip Green, Simon Cowell and company will continue to be exempt, but families going on summer holiday will now pay even more. If this is really a green tax, then surely fuel-inefficient private jets should face the most severe penalties.

3 Cargo exempt

While ordinary passengers face paying up to 118 per cent more, cargo companies will avoid any such charges. A poll this week found that 80 per cent of Britons believe the tax should be extended to cover cargo and private jets. Presumably, the 20 per cent who disagreed work for cargo companies or enjoy the use of private jets.

4 Caribbean crisis

The Caribbean has been unjustly hit under the tax. The Government's banding system means that travellers to Los Angeles (11 hours) will incur less duty than those flying to Barbados (eight hours).

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ANTOR JOINS FORCES WITH TRAVEL INDUSTRY PARTNERS TO LOBBY AND PROTEST AGAINST THE APD

5 Egyptian error

It is equally hard to understand why Tunisia is put in Band A (£11), when Egypt is in Band B (£40), alongside the US, Canada, the UAE and Oman. In other words, a 2,100-mile flight to Sharm El Sheikh will cost the same as a 5,500-mile flight to Los Angeles. Malaysia is among the other destinations to be disproportionately penalised.

6 Premium penalty

Premium-economy passengers will be hit hardest. The duty on their seats, which offer a little more legroom for a modest fee, will rise from £80 to £150 by the end of next year. This means a family of four flying to the Caribbean will pay £600 in duty, up from £320 – the same as those in first class or business class. Britain's leading tour operators say they might have to abandon their premium-economy cabins.

7 Economic impact

For evidence of the potential impact of this tax increase, look to Holland. Last year the Dutch government abandoned its equivalent of APD. It had brought in more than 300 million euros in revenue in a year, but the wider cost to the economy – thanks to the increased cost of travelling to Holland – was estimated at more than 1.2 billion euros. Britain, lagging behind the world in climbing out of recession, can not afford to make a similar mistake.

8 Environmental damage

The Government sold APD to the public as a "green" tax, yet not a penny has been spent on environmental causes. The tax generates £2 billion a year. The new system is expected to bring in £3.5 billion by 2012. Yet airlines are adamant that they already cover the cost of their carbon emissions. This tax, based on distance travelled, does not reward those who improve fuel efficiency. Environmental groups say it could slow investment in greener technologies and deter passengers from offsetting emissions on the grounds that they are already "doing their bit" by paying APD.

9 Domestic decline

Given that we are counting down to the Olympics in 2012, is raising APD by up to 118 per cent the best way to promote tourism to Britain? Foreign passengers pay the tax on their return leg. The UK is alone in Europe in having such a tax. Of course, this Government has never demonstrated much of a commitment to an industry that brings in £114 billion a year – there have been eight different tourism ministers in 12 years.

10 Regional penalties

Anyone travelling on a low-cost airline from the British regions to connect to London airports and on to Europe will have to pay the increased tax not just on one flight but on two. We can therefore expect travellers from the regions to avoid London, and the tax, by picking up their long-haul connections in Amsterdam.

Sign our petition to support the Telegraph campaign for APD to be abolished

ANTOR is pleased to join forces with the Telegraph and are actively encouraging all its members to participate by signing up to the Telegraph petition which can be accessed at the ANTOR website.



Eagle Radio Teams up with ANTOR

Eagle Radio are teaming up with ANTOR in 2010 to promote participating tourist board members of ANTOR through a yearlong radio promotion on 96.4 Eagle Radio which broadcast to Surrey & Hampshire with a uniquely high AB1 audience.

Each month a featured tourist board would provide a family (2 adults & 2 children under 18 years) holiday including half board accommodation and flights. Where possible the holiday will coincide with a special event, occasion or festival to add excitement and value to the holiday. 96.4 Eagle Radio will provide extensive coverage and promotion with an approximate value for each tourist board of approximately £8,000.

The monthly featured country/resort will be promoted through a combination of on-air messages, listener competition and interactive online activity. The competition mechanic - listeners will be encouraged to listen to 96.4 Eagle Radio for three specific songs in a particular order (i.e. Madonna's Holiday, Len's Sunshine, Spiller's Groove Jet). Listeners who hear the songs in the correct order phone the radio studios and will need to answer a question about the resort (information will be on the website) to win the holiday.

Each tourist board will provide the following for 2 adults & 2 children (under 18 years) -

- *Half board or all inclusive accommodation with a minimum 3* standard
- *Return flights inclusive of all airport taxes
- *Optional extras i.e. tickets to events/attractions etc

Eagle Radio will provide a minimum of the following -

*On-Air - credit for resort with sponsor tag and details of the prize (minimum of 60 credits over month) e.g. "96.4 Eagle Radio is giving you the chance to win a family holiday to Tobago - the capital of paradise...followed by details of prize (with return British Airways flights etc) and how to win"

* On-Air - 30 x second pre-recorded promotional trails telling listeners about the holiday, how they can win & includes resort's sponsor tag (minimum of 60 over the month) – as same format as above

*Online – full details of the holiday/attractions/special offers, hyperlinks

There are additional opportunities on County Sound Radio (Eagle Radio's sister station) which also broadcasts to Surrey & Hampshire, but specifically targets listeners aged between 50 and 65 years. If a tourist board wishes to participate but feels they would want a self-contained promotion featuring their country or resort or that their resort is more suited to this age demographic, we would offer a similar proposal using this radio station.

If any tourist board is interested in participating please contact Esther at esther@antor.com

Esther Smith, Executive Secretary - T: 0870 241 9084; F: 01962 711239; E:esther@antor.com; www.antor.com

TITBITS

Reed Travel Exhibitions 2009

EIBTM – 1 - 3 December, Barcelona, Spain

International Luxury Travel Market – 7 - 10 December, Cannes, France

For further information on these Fairs and Exhibitions see www.reedtravelexhibitions.com



Ramblers Worldwide Holidays have just launched their new brochures for 2010. These can be viewed online at www.ramblersholidays.co.uk www.ramblerscountrywide.co.uk.

If any of the tourist offices is interested in receiving a hard copy of the new brochures please contact Tony Maniscalco on 01707 386755 or e:mail - tonym@ramblersholidays.co.uk

MESSAGE FROM SECRETARIAT

Dear Member,

In the current climate, ANTOR provides a unique opportunity for destinations to work together, pool their resources through joint marketing initiatives and really leverage their marketing spend. Many of our activities would be impossible for most of our destinations to undertake individually but working together we can really raise the profile of your destination.

This is a reminder that it is important to keep your details up to date on the ANTOR website. If any member does not remember their password please contact me for them.

Lastly please don't forget to use the anti-clash calendar and if you have any news items send them to me.

Esther, Executive Secretary, ANTOR

ANTOR Members: Abu Dhabi, Andorra, Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium-Brussels-Wallonia, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Canada, Catalonia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark (Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Destination Quebec, Dominican Republic, Dubai, Egypt, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Grenada, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Jersey, Jordan, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Macau, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, North Cyprus, Norway, Oman, Peru, Poland, Romania, Rwanda, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, Trinidad & Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey and Visit Britain.