

## **Guidelines on TIC Membership Criteria**

### **(A) Premises**

#### **1. Exclusive use of premises**

To comply with Articles 4(2)(g) and 4(3)(g) of the TIC's M&A in respect of office premises, the following must be observed:

- (i) Approval will be given to:
  - units within commercial buildings, and
  - units within non-commercial buildings if the internal layout of the premises indicates that they are purely for commercial use and are considered to be suitable for conducting travel-related and tourism business.
- (ii) The premises occupied by the agent must be easily and directly accessible to the general public, e.g. directly accessible through their own entrance from a street, a public concourse or lobby.
- (iii) There must be a Tenancy Agreement or Assignment to prove Ownership or Written Confirmation to prove the agent has the right to use the premises concerned to carry out business.
- (iv) The premises where the agent operates must be easily and clearly identifiable to the general public as offering travel-related and tourism services by the use of a signboard or other displays which must be permanently affixed or visible from the main reception area, except for the tour desks located in licensed hotels.
- (v) Non-adjointing units in the same building may be considered as "one premises" and one membership certificate can cover an address with different and separate units of the same building. If however a member chooses to treat the separate units as individual offices, e.g. different branch offices or one main office and one branch office, separate certificates will be required.

#### **2. Sharing of premises**

According to Directive No. 249: "Rules for the sharing of premises", a member who meets the following conditions may apply to the TIC for conducting its travel-related and tourism business within the same premises with more than one member (including its parent / affiliate / holding company which shall also be a member):

- (i) such premises shall be separate and independent commercial premises / buildings which are easily identified as being used solely for travel-related and tourism business;
- (ii) the number of members which occupy such premises shall not exceed eight and each of them shall have an area not smaller than 30 square feet for its exclusive use as its business location;

- (iii) each of the members within such premises shall occupy an area which is well-defined and firmly partitioned off as its business location and shall be identifiable by its own code different from codes used by the other members;
- (iv) each of the members within such premises shall submit a tenancy agreement or a written agreement or other relevant documents to prove its right to use its business location, enclosed with the floor plan of such premises, on which the company name(s) or trade name(s) of each member and the location of its partitioned area shall be clearly designated; *Note*
- (v) the company name(s) or trade name(s) of each of the members shall be clearly displayed at the entrance or a prominent place near the entrance to such premises and at its business location within such premises for easy identification by the public;
- (vi) each of the members within such premises shall register with the TIC at least one telephone number and email address solely used by itself; and
- (vii) if any of the members has computers or storage space for important documents within such premises, such computers or storage space shall not be shared with the other members.

*Note: The floor plan of such premises and the business location of each of the members within such premises shall not be altered without prior written approval from the TIC.*

(B) Definition of travel-related and tourism business

The phrase “travel-related and tourism business” under Article 4 of the TIC’s M&A includes the following:

- (i) the operation, conducting or selling of package tours including tours with or without accommodation or transport;
- (ii) reservations for hotels or other types of holiday accommodation;
- (iii) reservations or arrangements for transportation including air, sea, and land transport and transfers including self-drive / car hire arrangements;
- (iv) information services relating to travel and tours;
- (v) provision of or reservation for tourist guide or shopping services to the tourists or sale of travel souvenirs;
- (vi) assistance to travellers with their applications for emigration, overseas studies, visas, travel documents and health documents;
- (vii) assistance with the selling of travel insurance;
- (viii) reservations of restaurants, convention / exhibition venues;

- (ix) arrangement for sightseeing or activities including delegation visits and property visits but agents should not be involved in the sale and purchase of the premises;
- (x) other ancillary services offered to agents' own clients such as money exchange, cargo forwarding, courier services etc.;
- (xi) all the above include either wholesale or retail services by the agent.

The Membership Committee may from time to time make further amendments / additions to the above guidelines subject to the approval from the TIC Board. While the Board will generally adopt the guidelines, they are subject to revision and the Board will exercise discretion in appropriate cases.

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