



Tour Operator / DMC Charter

Framework for Good Professional Practices

This charter sets out a shared framework of good professional practices designed to promote fair commercial conduct and sustainable cooperation between SETO member tour operators and their DMC partners.

Preamble

In recent years, disintermediation practices between distributing travel agencies and local DMCs have become more frequent. Agencies may now contact a tour operator's DMC partners directly to handle a file, after obtaining their details from a quotation or programme prepared by the tour operator.

This trend can weaken the tour operator's economic model and affect the consistency, quality and accountability of the organised travel value chain.

The purpose of this charter is to provide SETO members and their DMC partners with a practical framework of good practices. It is intended to preserve the value of each profession, strengthen quality and safety in production, and encourage fair, balanced and lasting relationships between tour operators, DMCs and distributing travel agencies.

This charter is not intended to restrict the commercial freedom of stakeholders or prevent distribution methods from evolving. It aims to regulate certain practices when they may undermine the quality, safety or balance of the sector, and to help prevent operational, human, financial or reputational risks for customers and for the profession.

Article 1 – DMC Commitments

The DMC commits to:

1. Adopt fair commercial conduct by not directly soliciting travel agencies in relation to files, programmes or commercial terms transmitted by a SETO member tour operator.
2. Respect the principle of non-circumvention by not reusing or directly offering agencies the rates, programmes, commercial terms or production elements developed by a SETO member tour operator.
3. Act transparently by informing the tour operator concerned of any direct approach received from an agency or customer regarding a product or itinerary within its production scope.

4. Preserve the confidentiality of commercial, pricing and strategic information shared by the tour operator within the partnership.
5. Build a lasting relationship based on trust, stability and service quality.
6. Ensure responsible practices in day-to-day operations, particularly regarding working conditions, partner selection, respect for local teams, service safety and the preservation of host destinations.

Article 2 – Tour Operator Commitments

The tour operator commits to:

1. Develop a co-construction approach with DMCs through close partnership, regular dialogue and complementary expertise.
2. Place the relationship with DMCs within a long-term partnership perspective and avoid unjustified competitive tendering whenever possible.
3. Give priority, where appropriate, to partner DMCs when handling requests and projects, in order to support stable relationships and regular business volumes.
4. Keep DMCs informed of file progress, confirmations and significant developments to foster smooth and effective collaboration.
5. Recognise the DMC's role as a key contributor to the quality, safety and success of trips.
6. Encourage responsible and sustainable practices within the partnership by highlighting DMCs committed to quality, respect for teams and the preservation of destinations.

Article 3 – Reminder of the Tour Operator's Added Value

A SETO member tour operator is more than an intermediary: it is an essential link in the organised travel value chain.

Working with a SETO member tour operator helps:

1. Secure the distributing agency through a structured legal and operational framework.
2. Guarantee quality through the selection and monitoring of local service providers, the overall consistency of programmes and an independent perspective.
3. Provide product expertise based on in-depth knowledge of destinations and markets, the design of balanced itineraries and a continuous capacity for innovation.
4. Ensure financial security through price negotiation, exchange-rate management, financial guarantees and professional liability coverage.
5. Provide a clear legal framework through the application of French and European law, consumer protection and responsibility assumed by the tour operator.
6. Manage unforeseen events and crisis situations by acting as a single point of contact able to coordinate actions and ensure continuity of service for the agency and the end customer.

Article 4 – SETO Commitments and Role

The SETO commits to:

1. Define, through this Tour Operator / DMC Charter, a clear framework of good commercial and operational practices between SETO members and their destination partners.
2. Monitor the dissemination and application of this charter on a regular basis.
3. Set up an information and exchange group for the Production Departments of tour operators.
4. Make this “SETO Production” group a forum for sharing information on good and poor practices observed in destinations. The group may also help identify particularly reliable DMCs and report DMCs whose practices do not reflect the values set out in this charter.

Signatures

For the DMC:		
Name	Date	Signature
For the Tour Operator:		
	Date	Signature
For SETO:		
Patrice Caradec Chairman	Date	Signature