

## **EBU OVERSEAS CONGRESSES**

The following points have been considered when planning and agreeing a contract for delivering this event.

The EBU is not, and does not intend to become a Travel Agent or Tour Operator. Therefore it is necessary for us to have a commercial agreement with a registered Tour Operator in order to successfully deliver an overseas event.

The main factors involved are the reservation of enough hotel rooms in the venue hotel and the securing of the conference facilities at an affordable rate. This process takes place 15 to 18 months before the planned date of the event.

In order to secure these facilities a premium has to be paid, as allocations for other major tour operators have to be trimmed in order to make the rooms available. Packages can then be offered to members from a selection of airports as soon as flight prices are set.

There will always be a 'deal' somewhere that will make our prices look expensive. These deals are only on limited offer and unpredictable - we cannot plan an event of this nature without having the guarantee that members can get to and stay at the venue hotel.

In the past when members were allowed to do their own deals the following occurred:

1. There was extreme disquiet among the members who had supported the package as they saw themselves effectively subsidising the 'independents'.
2. People not on the package had to be relocated to other hotels as the hotel was overbooked, an unfortunately all too common occurrence and one that we now guard against.
3. Cheap flights and holidays have been subject to very late cancellation and so other last minute arrangements had to be sought.

When running an event of this nature we need to have an accurate idea of numbers quite a time before the event takes place as we have to plan staff availability and also prepare all the boards for dispatch.. If we had a situation where people could just arrive and play we could not guarantee that the event could take place successfully. It is our experience that the majority of people that look for a deal will also delay booking their bridge until the last minute or will just turn up.

The current arrangements that we have with our Tour Operator guarantee the following:-

- The event will take place as planned and packages will be available for the venue hotel at a price guaranteed against currency fluctuation.
- There will be 24/7 representation by the tour operator during the event.
- The tour operator as the major sponsor of the event will pay an amount that is critical in staging one off events at overseas locations.

Members "buy in" to a package, or not at all. The EBU believes that this approach is in the best interests of the members as a whole.

The regulations on attendance are as follows:

1. All UK based competitors must book their flights and accommodation through the partner Holiday Company. In general competitors will be able to either book their travel through the Holiday Company or make their own travel arrangements. There may be some occasions when only the former is possible and competitors should consult the event brochure for exact details.
2. Non-UK based competitors are subject to the same arrangements as in regulation 1 unless they are a bona fide local resident. In which case there will be no levy on the bridge entry fee.
3. Competitors that have a permanent 'second home' in the locality of the venue may apply to Aylesbury to be exempt from regulation 1 (for up to a maximum of four persons) but will be subject to a 50% levy on the Bridge fee.
4. The Congress manger has the discretion to accept genuine holiday makers for a maximum of two single session events.
5. Overseas Congresses are not restricted events and competitors of all standards are welcome.

NB. The attendance of non-residents at the event is subject to the hotel policy on the use of the conference facilities by non-residents.

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