

**THE JORDAN INBOUND TOUR
OPERATORS ASSOCIATION**

**HIGH STANDARDS
THROUGH
BEST PRACTICE**

Codes of Ethics and Best Practice

2004

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Dear Tour Operator,

Establishing JITOA as an association to represent the unique interests of inbound tour operators and destination management specialists is an important step in matching the professionalism of the Association members to the new growth strategy for tourism.

Jordan's competitiveness in the global tourism economy is a critical issue depending significantly on the highest standards of operation. Technology capabilities have revolutionised the way in which business is transacted across borders and this will continue to create new challenges for all. Integrity and trust are fundamentally important as the products of the tour operator combine many diverse ingredients that must be integrated together to deliver the holiday experience.

Staff and the quality and integrity of human interaction remain supremely important in planning and concluding the arrangements, and also play a determining role in service delivery.

The members of JITOA have been motivated to join together to better respond to the challenges of future tourism growth. They have set out to create a comprehensive code, which is informed by international experience and best practice, but is unique to Jordan's needs as a growth economy setting trends in its region.

When it is agreed and endorsed by the association it will provide a strong anchor and will be key to ensuring that the Association and its members meet or exceed the demands of developing international competition.

Members will be assured that the code fully reflects the high ethical standards they wish to embed in their sector and the tourism industry.

September 2004

Why create codes of standards and conduct?

JITOA is now in its establishment phase. The founding members want to strike the correct balance that will differentiate their members from others and will enable their members to network with similar bodies internationally. The past mindset of doing business through a series of one off arrangements is no longer effective. It has been superseded by the need to create business arrangements that are continuous and seamless. Trade members wish to collaborate together to build their business sustainably for mutual benefit. This also recognises in a new way the interdependence of most business relationships. At this time trade groups are seeking to commit to these new arrangements through the establishment of codes, standards and agreements that serve as foundations for establishing best practice standards and building trust.

Specifically this work brings the following values:-

- It establishes the correct foundation for sustainable business relationships among JITOA members in Jordan and in the international arena.
- It gains professional recognition for JITOA and sets quality standards that differentiate the members from other groups.
- It enables the JITOA group to deal with common issues and to obtain better value in terms of services due to established quality standards.
- It enables JITOA members to participate more fully in the global network of destination management companies
- It reduces barriers to global integration in travel
- It facilitates the establishment of bi-lateral agreements with other trade dependencies and groups where assured standards will build trust and confidence to work together in a solution oriented environment that is essential for tourism.

The Context

The Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association is founded on the belief that the tourism sector is one of the most important in terms of its potential impact on economic development and societal advancement in Jordan. The association further accepts that the sustainable growth of the tourism economy can best be achieved through professional partnerships driven by the private sector and supported and facilitated by Government and the JTB. These partnerships are founded on the opportunity for all sectors to create and develop profitable business in a context of mutual working and professional respect.

Vision

The membership of JITOA will consist of Tour Operators and DMC professionals who are distinguished and characterised by their strict adherence to the codes to which they subscribe and they will constructively engage with Government, its agencies, trade partners and other groups to build the business of tourism for mutual profitable advantage, **To achieve Global recognition of the JITOA mark of excellence.**

Mission

Deriving from its statement of vision the mission of the Jordan In Bound Tour Operators Association is to establish and maintain the highest professional standards among its members through strict adherence to the codes to which they subscribe. It seeks to sustain its professionalism and business success through the continual upgrading of members capacity and capability at every level of operations through education, qualification, training and best practice as the optimum way of meeting the challenges that are inherent in tourism growth, customer relevance and business profitability.

JITOA is a mutual association of professionals who are committed to achieving and maintaining best practice ethics and standards among its members as the optimum pathway to developing their business profitably and sustainably.

1. The Codes of Ethics to which JITOA members Subscribe.

The core values of the business of the constituent members of JITOA derives from the offering of customized products created through the consolidation of products and services from other sectors to which it adds its own values through marketing, services and organization. This positioning and the relationship networks it requires make it impossible for the sector collectively or individually to prosper without the practice of good business ethics by its members.

The members of JITOA subscribe to this code of ethics as an inherent element of their personal and business conduct to which they pledge themselves.

- a. We believe in dealing honestly and fairly with each other as members of JITOA and that we will comply in all respects with the codes and standards we have set and agreed to govern our relationships with each other and our trade partners.
- b. We believe that respect, fairness and friendliness should be inherent in all our business dealings and relationships.
- c. Our objective is to create profitable, sustainable businesses. We believe that business profitability is not only a right, but an obligation in order to preserve the continuity of our business, the sustainability of employment and the quality of our products and services. We equally recognize the right of those we deal with to operate profitably.
- d. We believe that we have the continuous responsibility to strive to improve our capacity, capability, products and services. We will invest in and manage all of these areas so as to enhance their quality, relevance and value to our customers.
- e. We believe that the best interests of our business are served when we set fair and equitable conditions for our staff and those who work for us. Our objective is to develop our business and services to create sustainable employment and career opportunities for those who work for and contribute to our success.
- f. We believe in a policy of quality, promptness and excellence of service to all our customers and business associates.
- g. We expect all JITOA members to represent their companies and their products and services with honesty, integrity and confidence.
- h. We believe that our priority business responsibility is to our customers, suppliers, business associates, and fellow JITOA members, and that this should take precedence over all other interests.
- i. We believe that there is an interaction between business policies and social responsibilities. We will therefore ensure that our policies support where

possible the excellence and sustainability of our environment, the constructive development of culture and heritage and the advancement of our society.

- j. We believe in and encourage membership networking. JITO A members are encouraged to give first right of refusal on equal terms of service, rates and conditions to their JITO A colleagues.

2. Code of Conduct

General

All members and applicants for membership of JITO A are required to:

- a. Accept personally and on behalf of their companies and enterprises all of the policies, directives and codes of JITO A to which they subscribe and understand that this acceptance places additional responsibilities on them.
- b. Accept the responsibility to abide by and follow all of the policies, directives and Codes established by JITO A and understand that these codes characterize their conduct and business dealings and differentiate them from others.
- c. Accept and recognize that in joining JITO A they are joining a special group, dedicated to professionalism, quality, capacity building and business opportunity
- d. Submit to the provisions of the disciplinary code and its procedures as established by the board of JITO A. This will include dealing promptly with any complaints and responding promptly and in full to all communications from the disciplinary committee or the executive director.
- e. Support the objectives and goals of JITO A and the right of the association to speak with one voice on important issues affecting the interests of members and the development of tourism.
- f. Membership in JITO A implies that members have read and understand the codes, policies and directives of the association and that they fully agree to apply it in all respects in the conduct of their business. They further understand that any breach of the above articles may result in disciplinary action including expulsion from JITO A.

Application

- g. Applications for membership shall be in writing only, on the forms approved by JITO A for this purpose. Each applicant will provide all of the information required and the application form will be accompanied by the required membership fee, application fee and other supporting documentation required.
- h. Applicants for membership shall not misrepresent their qualifications and experience in the business or sectors of the business in which they are engaged

and shall not seek unjustified references or otherwise mislead as this will disqualify their membership application.

- i. The board of JITOA in its sole discretion shall establish all of the procedures, qualifications and conditions for membership and shall be the sole arbiter in relation to the granting of membership, the category of membership and the conditions for membership granted.

Ethical Business Conduct

- j. No member shall:-
 - I. Make false or misleading statements about another member whether designed to injure him in his business dealings or otherwise.
 - II. Misuse or provide to others any confidential information obtained from another member.
 - III. Make adverse comments regarding the capability, expertise or professionalism of another member
 - IV. Take confidential information, intellectual property or creative ideas from another member or from current or former employees of other members and present them to customers as his/her own exclusive creation and work.
 - V. Take confidential information or creative ideas that are the property of a member and make them known to competitors or others for any reason.
- k. No member shall intentionally or negligently misinform or mislead, by act or omission in business dealings about actual conditions or services and the members ability to deliver what has been contracted or promised.
- l. Members will treat all details of their negotiations with clients and suppliers as confidential. Members must protect the confidentiality of all business arrangements and not knowingly reveal details of such agreements to third parties.
- m. A member intending to leave employment and join with another firm or to establish another company shall abstain from soliciting future business for the other company, and shall not displace any confirmed business or take advantage of confidential information as long as contracted to the original employer.
- n. A member shall honour signed contracts with suppliers and clients as the highest business obligation and will seek to carry out all contractual obligations in the spirit as well as may be legally required.
- o. Members shall pay their invoiced liabilities promptly, honouring the conditions of credit that they have individually negotiated or have been agreed with trade partners in bi-lateral agreements or as is covered by commercial practice or law.

- p. Members shall not attempt to convert business to themselves by directly or indirectly bringing the name of another JITOA member into disrepute.
- q. Members should confirm all services in written form in order to confirm the contract and gain protection from any bi-lateral agreements negotiated by JITOA with suppliers and other trade partner groups.
- r. Members will, as soon as possible after it becomes known to them, release back to the supplier any contracted accommodation or services no longer required.
- s. Any member elected or appointed to a position with the support of JITOA or as the nominee of JITOA shall represent the views of the association and shall not seek personal advantage from such appointment or position.
- t. Any member appointed or representing JITOA in any business mission shall report back to the executive director who will where necessary prepare a communication for the board or members.
- u. All official contacts with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities on behalf of the tour operating and DM businesses will be through JITOA. Individual contacts should only deal with issues specific to the members business. It is vitally important to the interests of the membership that the association speaks with one voice on their behalf in particular in relation to policy, regulatory and taxation issues.

Disciplinary Code

The Association has established a disciplinary code and procedures for the good governance of the Association and for regulating the conduct of members so that it continuously supports JITOA objectives, professionalism and the reputation and good standing of the Association.

The disciplinary code and procedures will be exercised by a committee established by the board for that purpose. It will be the duty of this committee to investigate complains that involve issues of serious business or ethical concern that are made in writing only, to the Association executive director or any of its board members or officers. The executive director of JITOA may also at any time request the committee to examine and decide any matter bearing on the areas of interpretation or of member compliance with the codes, policies and directives of JITOA.

The disciplinary committee will consist of three people appointed by the board of the Association. They may be members or non members of the Association but the Chairman or executive director pro tem shall not be eligible to serve on the disciplinary committee. The committee will act by majority decision and may proceed through the medium of meetings or written procedure to advance their business. Minutes will be made of all

meetings and will be retained as confidential to the committee and to the executive director who will retain them for the record.

The committee will consider a complaint only where it is received in writing and signed by the complainant or where a matter is referred to them by the board of directors and/or the executive director. The committee will investigate the complaint as they decide in their sole competence to be appropriate to the circumstances. There is no right to be heard in person but there is a right for the complained of member to enter a written statement or to respond in writing to the complaint.

It will be a mandatory part of the investigation procedure that all aspects of the complaint investigation are dealt with in writing for the avoidance of doubt. It is also mandatory that as early as feasible in the process that the elements of the complaint are conveyed in writing to the principal of the member (company) complained of and that sufficient time is allowed for a response in writing to be received by the committee. Any failure to respond may not delay or invalidate the work of the committee who may proceed on the basis of evidence offered and their own investigation.

The committee shall determine two resolutions regarding any complaint submitted to it:

- a. Approving the complaint and hearing it.
- b. Disapproving the complaint.

In case of the approved complaint, the committee is entitled to appeal the conclusion to the board with a recommendation, in order to adopt the convenience sanction against the dissenting member.

The board is allowed to adopt the following sanctions:

- a. Emanating a written appeal against the dissenting member.
- b. Solidifying the member's membership for a period of time.

The decision of the board is final within the statutes of the association.

JITOA Members
September 2004