



International Association
of Tour Managers Ltd

The employment status of Tour Managers

In view of the ongoing debate regarding the employment status of Tour Managers (Tour Directors, Tour Guides) and the proposed extension of the EU Working Time Directive to mobile workers, IATM makes the following statement on behalf of its members.

Tour Managers are hired by Tour Operators to accompany their passengers on group tours. Their role is to ensure that the published itinerary is fulfilled in all respects and to care for the needs of passengers from the beginning to the end of their tour.

Over many years, Tour Managers who are members of the International Association of Tour Managers have repeatedly stated their desire to retain their freelance (independent contractor), status. They do not view themselves as employees of the Tour Operators for which they work and, in large majority, would not wish to become employees of Tour Operators.

The nature of a Tour Manager's work does not fit conventional employment status with regard to, for example, fixed hours, closely-defined working responsibilities or managerial oversight. Indeed, Tour Operators judge the value of the Tour Managers they hire precisely on the basis that they have proven ability to use their own initiative to handle situations in their own way making use of their own experience. Tour Managers accept that their work could never be accomplished within a framework of fixed hours and constant oversight. Tour Managers do not see this as detrimental to their interests; rather it is this very independence of action that has attracted them to this work instead of conventional employment.

As an international association IATM recognises that there are areas of the world where it is the norm for Tour Managers to be employees of a company and this is no bar to membership of the association. However, this is exceptional and does not affect the association's aim to establish the freelance (independent contractor) status of all Tour Managers where such possibility exists.

IATM Board of Directors
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