

Consultation Paper – 2025 ATAS Charter Review

Review of framework documentation for the Australian Travel Accreditation Scheme (ATAS)

You are invited to provide feedback.

This consultation paper seeks feedback on the Australian Travel Accreditation Scheme (ATAS) framework documentation namely the ATAS Code of Conduct and Charter.

These framework documents establish the rules outlining the responsibilities of or proper practices for participation in and the administration of the scheme.

Please see the Submissions section in this document on how to make a submission.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On 7 December 2012, a majority of state and territory Ministers for Consumer Affairs approved a Travel Industry Transition Plan (Transition Plan) which resulted in the phased ending of the national cooperative scheme regulating travel intermediaries. This included the winding up of the Travel Compensation Fund (TCF) and the abolition of the requirement for travel agents to be licensed by their respective states.

On 1 July 2014, the Australian Federation of Travel Agents Limited (ACN 001 444 275) (AFTA) established the AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme (ATAS) which was subsequently amended to the Australian Travel Accreditation Scheme (ATAS).

On 15 August 2023, The Australian Federation of Travel Agents was renamed The Australian Travel Industry Association. On 25 October 2024, the Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA), announced the retirement of the ATAS accreditation designator and the ATAS scheme now grants eligible participants the designation of ATIA Accredited.

ATAS is a voluntary scheme, and its Charter and Code of Conduct were drafted using the ACCC guidelines for developing effective voluntary industry codes of conduct as a reference.

- 1.2 The objectives of ATAS are to:
- a) Establish a nationally recognised accreditation scheme for travel intermediaries that demonstrates to consumers the professional standing of those within the travel industry;
 - b) Maintain high standards of service delivery by requiring ATIA Accredited Participants to meet the requirements set out in the ATAS Charter as well as the ATAS Code, and provide for suitable consequences when these requirements are not met;
 - c) Inform consumers about the benefits of using an ATIA Accredited professional when booking travel;
 - d) Facilitate the resolution of disputes arising between Participants and consumers; and
 - e) Ensure the professionalism of the travel industry into the future.
- 1.3 Participants in the scheme are travel intermediaries who are accredited under ATAS, being domiciled, registered or incorporated in Australia, and providing a travel product or service on behalf of a travel supplier. This includes, but is not limited to, a travel agent, travel management company, aggregator, distributor, online travel agent, inbound and outbound tour operator, wholesaler and consolidator.

2. REVIEW

The ATAS Charter provides a commitment from the ATIA Board to review the ATAS Charter and Code in 2025 and every 3 years pursuant to clause 3.3(a) of the ATAS Charter.

- 2.1 Pursuant to clause 3.3(b) a review of the Charter and Code will be conducted according to the Terms of Reference for the Review as approved by the Board as required.
- 2.2 The aim of the review is to receive feedback and suggest improvements from interested parties in regard to:
 - a. the effectiveness of the scheme in achieving the objectives mentioned in paragraph above; and
 - b. the operation of the scheme.The review will be limited to the ATAS Charter and Code, including all appendixes (ACAC Terms of Reference and Solvency Definitions).
- 2.3 An appointment will be made for a Reviewer to review submissions from interested parties and then provide a report to the ATIA Board for its consideration.
- 2.4 The outcomes of the Review will be published on the ATIA website including all submissions made during the consultation period, the Reviewer's recommendations and the ATIA Board's response to those recommendations.
- 2.5 The ATIA Board will make any amendments to the Charter, Code, or the ACAC Terms of Reference which are warranted by its response to the review

3. CONSULTATION PERIOD

- 3.1 All interested parties are invited to make a submission to this review. All submissions must be in written form and either mailed or emailed to ATIA prior to the deadline. All submissions will be made public in keeping with the transparent approach to the review that ATIA has adopted. Submission details will be released once a Reviewer has been appointed.
- 3.2 Timeframe – the consultation period will open 2 June 2025 and close on 1 July 2025 at 5:00pm AEST with the following milestones proposed to be observed:

Terms of reference released	1 April 2025
Submission period open	2 June 2025
Submissions close	1 July 2025
Report to be submitted to ATIA by the appointed reviewer	29 July 2025

4. SUBMISSION DETAILS

Copies of the Charter and Code are available on the ATIA website at:

<https://atia.travel/Accreditation/Scheme-Governance>

Submissions are due by 1 July 2025 5pm AEST and no submission received after that date will be considered in this review.

Submissions can be made via the following methods:

Via email: atia@atia.travel

Please indicate Subject as: 2025 ATAS Charter Review Submission

Via Post to:

ATAS – Review Submission

Level 31

31 Market Street

Sydney NSW 2000

When making a submission, please indicate whether you consent to your submission being made publicly available, or if you wish for it to remain confidential.

All queries should be directed to Nina Hedges, Director of Compliance & Membership at nina.hedges@atia.travel or on (02) 9287 9900.