

Proposed Implementation Plan for the Coach Tourism Business Continuity Scheme

Introduction

The July 2020 Stimulus Package announced the €10m Coach Tourism Business Continuity Scheme in recognition of the difficult challenges the coach tourism sector faces, and to assist its survival through the pandemic. The scheme is to be administered by Fáilte Ireland.

This note sets out a proposed pathway for the implementation of the Scheme.

Proposed Implementation Process

The steps in the process are as follows:

1. Qualifying for the Scheme.
2. Provision of the applicant's turnover in coach tourism.
3. Application timescales and assessment process.

Each of these is discussed in turn below.

1. Qualifying for the Scheme

The key requirement is that the applicant is engaged in Coach Tourism. This will need to be demonstrated by either of the following:

- (a) Membership of the Coach Tourism and Transport Council of Ireland; **or**
- (b) Proof that the applicant owns a vehicle which qualified for a VAT 71 repayment during the period 2015-2020. This will be by means of provision of the necessary information on the application form. (Note: the vehicle which has been purchased second-hand after the VAT was reclaimed is sufficient for proof).

The proposed application form is shown in Appendix A.

2. Provision of the applicant's turnover in coach tourism

Each applicant will be asked to identify their coach turnover for 2019. Please note, only turnover on coach hire services by Large Public Service Vehicles (i.e. capable of carrying more than 8 passengers) qualify for the Scheme. This turnover must be certified on the application form by the signature of the accountancy firm who undertake the applicant's accountancy and auditing work.

The application form also asks for:

- Confirmation that part or all of the applicant's business is in the Coach Tourism sector.
- Confirmation that the applicant's turnover on coach tourism in 2020 is at least 50% lower than in the 2019 Financial Year.
- Details of the applicant's bank account for payment of the Scheme.
- Confirmation that the applicant is tax compliant.

3. Application timescales and assessment process

The following timescales are proposed.

Opening of the Scheme:

It is proposed that the scheme is opened to applicants on Tuesday 11th of August. Publicity will be by means of press releases from Fáilte Ireland to local and national media, as well as on social media. The CTTC will also issue press releases and will contact all relevant operators to ensure that they are made aware of the scheme.

Closing date for Receipt of Applications

The Scheme will be open for applications for a two-week period, i.e. until Friday 22nd of August.

Assessment of Applications

The assessment will be undertaken by Fáilte Ireland and will consist of the following process:

- a) Validation of each application, confirming that they are eligible for the scheme membership. Validation will be made by checking that the application form is completed in full and that the information given is sufficient.
- b) The coach turnover of each eligible applicant will be summed up to obtain a total turnover of eligible coach tour operators. The €10m Scheme will be directly apportioned amongst all eligible applicants on the basis of their share of the total turnover. For example, if the total industry turnover is €200m and Operator A's coach turnover is €20m then Operator A will receive €1m of the €10 million fund.
- c) The assessment process will be completed by Friday 29th of August.
- d) Payment will be made by bank transfer in the following week.

Transparency and Auditability of the Scheme

It is proposed that Fáilte Ireland, and their agents, retain the right to appoint independent auditors to carry out a post-review audit of up to 10% of operators who receive payment under this scheme. The Auditors will have the right to require proof of the operator's involvement in coach tours (by, for instance, checking receipts for hotels, invoices to tour operators, etc.) and will also have the right to examine the financial accounts of the operators. Failure to provide the required proof will expose the operator to potential court action.

Appendix A:Coach Tourism Business Continuity Scheme Application Form

1. Company Name: _____

2. CRO Number: _____

3. RPTOL Number: _____

4. Are you a member of the CTTC? (Yes / No) _____

If "Yes" then go to Question 6. If "No" then please answer Question 5.

5. Please provide the following details for **any** coach you own for which VAT was reclaimed in the past five years. (Note: This provides evidence of involvement in coach tourism).

5.1 Registration Number _____

5.2 Chassis Number _____

5.3 Engine Number _____

5.4 Year of Manufacture _____

6. Our Company and our Accountant can confirm the following information:

Certified Statements	Enter a ✓
6.1 We are engaged in the business of carriage for reward of tourists by road under contracts for group transport	
6.2 Our turnover on coach tourism in 2020 is at least 50% lower than in 2019	
6.3 We are tax compliant	
6.4 The information contained in this document is correct and is a true reflection of our coach tourism activity in 2019 and 2020	
6.5 We understand that the provision of fraudulent information on this application form exposes our company to potential legal proceedings	

Certified Data	Enter the amount / number
6.6 Turnover on coach hire services by Large Public Service Vehicles for 2019	
6.7 Bank Sort Code	
6.8 Bank Account Number	

7. Signatures

7.1 Applicant

7.2 Accountant for Applicant

8. Date: _____