



WORKING ON HOT TOPICS

The rebranded BTA aims to address the crucial issues impacting business travel

WRITE THIS In my first few days as chief executive of the BTA and I've a busy month ahead. Looking at the diary, it's a jam-packed first 30 days in the role. I'm excited to get started and play my part in delivering against the BTA's mission of promoting discussion and making a difference on the industry issues that matter to the business travel sector.

What better way for me to kick things off than by hosting a Buyer Advisory Board in early September. I look forward to hearing from the travel buyers their opinions on the current issues concerning our members and the wider industry.

As always there are many hot topics that have our attention at the moment, not least PSD2 and Strong Customer Authentication. One of our first working sessions will be examining if and how our industry is meeting these upcoming challenges.

September is packed with strategy group meetings, too. First up is our Surface Transport Strategy Group where we'll be debating issues, such as ticketing and Delay Repay, with the help of our industry

partners, including the Rail Delivery Group. We will also be hosting our Technology Strategy Group, which concentrates on the opportunities and obstacles that emerge from the constant stream of new technology innovations in this sector. The hat trick of strategy groups is completed this month with our Air Strategy Group. Topics, including sustainability, distribution and regional connectivity, remain high on the agenda for our members and airline partners.

Between board and strategy group meetings, I am squeezing in a quick visit to Northern Ireland. We announced back in July that it would be the host destination for our 2020 conference and I am flying out for a two-day recce, and looking forward to starting the planning for this prestigious event.

NEW PARTNERSHIPS

I am honoured to be given the opportunity to take the reins of the BTA at such a pivotal point in its history. The new name and broadened strategy better reflects the work that the organisation has been doing over the years on behalf of its

diverse range of TMC members and their clients, partners and industry associates. The BTA in collaboration with its members and partners must define the future and stop tweaking the past to make this industry successful for the entire business travel community.

Forging new partnerships with associations in relevant vertical sectors is something I'm hugely passionate about as we further our commitment to the business travel sector.

ONGOING ISSUES

Wellbeing in the workplace is another significant issue. Traveller friction and its effect on health is of increasing concern for corporates, and we must ensure we apply the same rigour in managing the physical and mental health of all staff wherever they work in our industry.

Sustainability is a topic that we must spend time discussing. Whether it's choosing to offset flights, for example, or promoting training and development courses to future-proof the industry, as the chief executive of the BTA it is a subject I am keen to drive during my time in the hotseat.

As I undertake my new voyage, I would like to take this opportunity to invite all readers to get in touch if they think the BTA can help them.



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