

# Air Travel Organisers Licensing Act 2024: Your Essential Guide to Licensing and Compliance

The Air Travel Organisers Licensing Act 2024 (ATOLA) is a landmark piece of legislation that introduces a new licensing regime for air travel organisers (ATOs) in the United Kingdom. The act aims to enhance consumer protection and ensure the financial stability of ATOs, ultimately improving the safety and reliability of the air travel industry.

## Who Needs an ATO Licence?

The ATOLA applies to any business that arranges or sells air travel services to customers in the UK. This includes:



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Language : English  
File size : 1461 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 6 pages  
Screen Reader : Supported



- Travel agents
- Tour operators
- Online booking platforms

- Ticket brokers
- Consolidators

If you fall into any of these categories, you will need to obtain an ATO licence from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) before you can operate legally.

## **Benefits of an ATO Licence**

Obtaining an ATO licence offers several benefits for businesses:

- **Enhanced credibility:** An ATO licence demonstrates to customers that your business meets strict regulatory standards, enhancing your credibility and attracting new customers.
- **Improved customer protection:** The ATOLA provides financial protection for customers in the event of an ATO's insolvency, giving them peace of mind when booking travel through your business.
- **Access to industry resources:** ATO licence holders have access to industry-specific resources and support from the CAA, including training and guidance materials.
- **Regulatory compliance:** The ATOLA ensures that ATOs comply with all relevant regulations, reducing the risk of legal penalties and reputational damage.

## **How to Obtain an ATO Licence**

To obtain an ATO licence, businesses must submit an application to the CAA along with the following documentation:

- Business plan
- Financial statements
- Proof of financial security
- Details of key personnel
- Copies of relevant contracts

The CAA will review the application and conduct a series of checks, including a financial assessment and background checks on key personnel. The licensing process can take several months to complete.

### **Ongoing Compliance Obligations**

Once you have obtained an ATO licence, you must comply with ongoing obligations, such as:

- Maintaining adequate financial security
- Submitting annual accounts to the CAA
- Attending industry training and development events
- Reporting any changes in your business or key personnel

Failure to comply with these obligations may result in the suspension or revocation of your ATO licence.

### **Enforcement and Penalties**

The CAA has the authority to enforce the ATOLA and impose penalties on businesses that operate without a licence or breach their compliance obligations. These penalties can include:

- Fines
- Suspension or revocation of licence
- Criminal prosecution

The Air Travel Organisers Licensing Act 2024 is a significant piece of legislation that aims to enhance consumer protection and the financial stability of the air travel industry. By obtaining an ATO licence, businesses can demonstrate their commitment to compliance, attract new customers, and benefit from access to industry resources.

If you are involved in the air travel sector, it is essential that you understand the requirements of the ATOLA. Our comprehensive guide provides you with the necessary information to navigate the licensing process and ensure ongoing compliance.



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