



## **SELECTION OF TOUR OPERATORS**

In selecting a tour operator, a formal bidding process is not always followed. Reputation, expertise, and experience in planning tours for non-profit, natural history-oriented groups are the most essential criteria. Although top value for our travelers is important, the operator offering the lowest price will not be selected if quality is sacrificed. A stipend/commission is added to the wholesale cost of each tour to partially cover the administrative costs borne by the Zoo's travel office. That amount must be paid in full to the Philadelphia Zoo within 30 days of the tour's return.

Following is a list of representative criteria which may be considered in our selection of a tour operator.

- Ability to provide sufficient insurance coverage—we require a minimum of \$2,000,000 general liability and certification that the PZG is named as the additional insured with a 30-day notice of cancellation.
- Ability to produce the type and quality of tour which is appropriate for Zoo travelers, and willingness to allow the Philadelphia Zoo final approval as to itinerary, transportation, and accommodations.
- Willingness to collaborate with the Philadelphia Zoo on the design and content of promotional pieces.
- Expertise and experience in the destination area(s)
- Ability to include something unique in the itinerary of special interest to our Zoo guests
- Maintenance of a branch office or strong contacts with ground operator(s) in the destination area(s).
- Membership in IATA, or capability of working through a travel agent who is a member of IATA.
- Educational support for the travel planner, leader and participants.
- Ability to arrange for local guides and/or guest speakers throughout the tour to present quality on-sight interpretation, supplementing the Zoo's leader.
- Expertise in natural history-oriented group travel, particularly with such entities as zoos.
- References – both financial and personal.
- Demonstrated environmental commitment.