

MEMBERS MEETING

September 18, 2025

The main purpose of the meeting is to provide an activity report in 2025.

Quick recap

- The meeting covered updates on various operational matters.
- CATO urging member participation for the upcoming **TICO AGM** due to significant operational changes recommended by the Auditor General.
 - TICO AGM scheduled for Thursday the 25th, where TICO will present their progress on implementing Auditor General recommendations. Cato noted that TICO has completed approximately 70% of recommended operational changes while the ministry has taken no action on the recommendation for a comprehensive review of the Act.
 - It was also mentioned a recent meeting with the minister's staff where they requested information about implementation plans and updates on the 2023 AG report, emphasizing the need for government action on the recommendations.
- Concerns were raised regarding the **government's lack of action** on a comprehensive review of the Act, which has been pending for nearly two years.
- Claude noted **similarities and differences in governmental operations between Ontario and Quebec**, while CATO discussed upcoming changes from TICO, including individual registration.
 - Jean highlighted differences between Quebec and Ontario's regulatory models, (and in the other provinces) highlighting that Quebec's single authority system under OPC is more cost-effective than Ontario's multiple independent authorities.
 - He expressed concerns about TICO's increasing costs being absorbed by the industry and questioned the rationale for a proposed individual registration system.
- **Peter suggested a recap of past recommendations to gather member feedback for future discussions, emphasizing the need for a collective stance on these issues.**
- Brett Walker provided **details about the ETC CATO event scheduled for November 4th**, highlighting the participation and the event's informal networking format. Participants: 8TO and 6 EU countries.
- CATO also addressed **advertising compliance issues**, revealing that TICO found no compliance violations but suggested improvements. David Green from G Adventures expressed concerns about pricing practices and criticized TICO for its lack of transparency and action.

- **TICO's Advertising Compliance Decision**

Cato provided an update on advertising practice concerns, explaining that after meetings with TICO and reviewing regulations, TICO determined there was no compliance issue as Exotica's discount practices align with Ontario rules allowing market-based pricing rather than requiring reference to past regular prices. David expressed disappointment with TICO's approach, noting that while Exotica has stopped displaying was-now prices, they continue using percentage-based discounts with detailed justifications supported by TICO's policy. The group acknowledged the high costs and limited effectiveness of pursuing further legal action, with Cato suggesting the need for a broader review of travel regulations and policies.

- CATO confirmed plans for the **symposium in Switzerland**, with most operators receiving confirmations of flights and activities.

- **Switzerland Symposium Flight Updates**

Oliver provided updates on the December symposium in Switzerland, confirming flight bookings and activity selections for participants. He noted that while most confirmations were received, some participants still needed to confirm their Interlaken program choices. Oliver mentioned that business class seats on the return flight were fully booked, with limited economy options available, and offered flexibility for flight changes with a CAD 400 waiver for modifications within Swiss Airlines. The event will include one-to-one appointments with Swiss destinations and a panorama train ride from Interlaken to Montreux.

- CATO out-of-country summit in 2026 is currently discussed with Visit Brazil. CATO responded that while Brazil discussions are ongoing, they remain open to considering other destinations.
- **About the Economic Impact Analysis update for 2025**, a survey will soon be distributed, emphasizing the importance of member participation and the need for better data to understand market conditions.
 - A survey will be sent to members in October, with a three-month completion period, and will include new questions about the Canada-US trade relationship and tariff impacts. Brett suggested assembling a committee to review and curate questions from the previous 2023 survey, which CATO agreed to, promising to share a first draft of the questionnaire in the next two weeks for review.

- **Beyond Border Tourism Coalition Update**

Cato updated the team about the Beyond Borders Tourism Coalition, an initiative created to unite U.S. and Canadian tourism leaders in addressing the negative impact of tariffs on cross-border travel and trade. The coalition aims to influence policymakers and raise awareness through media about the economic consequences, including a projected 70% drop in advanced bookings and potential losses of \$18 billion in U.S. foreign tourist spending and \$13 billion in annual U.S. visitor spending in Canada by

2025. Cato mentioned that the coalition has a coordinating committee that meets bi-weekly and has contributed funds to develop a website to explain the initiative.

Laura raised concerns about U.S. destinations needing better data on tourism numbers and requested more specific market information

Next steps

- [Jean to prepare a recap of CATO's position on TICO recommendations and share it with board members.](#)
- [Jean to conduct a survey with members about TICO recommendations and potential changes.](#)
- [Tour operators participating in the ETC CATO event to submit their agent names to Splash Marketing if they haven't done so already.](#)
- [Jean to send the Beyond Borders Tourism Coalition website link to board members.](#)
- [Jean to share the draft Economic Impact Analysis questionnaire with board members in the next two weeks.](#)
- [Jean to form a committee to review the Economic Impact Analysis survey questions.](#)
- [Claude to help Jean include Quebec tour operators in the Economic Impact Analysis.](#)
- [Jean to keep board members updated on plans for the out-of-country meeting in Brazil for 2026.](#)