

Dear ATO Letter 9/2008

To: All Accredited Trade Organisations

07 November 2008

TRADESHOW ACCESS PROGRAMME: BROADENING OF SUPPORT

In the current economic climate it is clear that overseas marketing has become much more challenging and that increased government support would help in maintaining business participation at overseas events. Feedback from ATOs suggests that an increase in the number of grant lives a business can obtain would encourage the long term commitment of businesses to markets.

We therefore wish to make some changes to TAP which will enhance support to SMEs entering overseas markets this year and within the three year perspective (to 2011) announced by the Minister for Trade and Investment at the TAP launch last April. These enhancements will increase grant lives from 1 April 2009; broaden grant allowances for the remainder of this year; and introduce wider criteria to define a company's export experience.

Changes

Grant Allowance

i) From 1 April we will increase the current three grants limit per company to six grants, provided that the company takes part in trade shows in at least two markets.

The proviso on markets is intended to influence diversification without being overly prescriptive on market selection. We will re-start grant allowances for businesses from 1 April 2009 as this is more transparent for the customer and simpler for UKTI and ATOs to administer.

ii) For the remainder of this year, businesses that have used their three grant lives by the end of last year (2007/08) will be eligible to apply for one more grant at any event in the programme. Alternatively, such companies could apply for one Solo grant this year.

This broadens the change we made in August, which applied only to certain shows. If a business has already used its 'extra' grant this year it will not be able to apply for another one.



Company Eligibility

These changes to grant allowance will apply to SMEs meeting the following export experience criteria.

**iii) SMEs will be eligible to seek grant support if either or both of the following applies:
they are 'new to export' according to the UKTI definition;
they have been exporting for less than 10 years.**

Using these criteria together will allow TAP to support a range of relatively inexperienced businesses: novice exporters; businesses whose exports have not yet taken off as a proportion of their turnover; and 'born globals' who may be very young companies but have been exporting substantially since their inception. This change will come into effect now and will therefore apply to the rest of this year as well as next year.

Mature SME exporters who do not fit within the above criteria i.e. they have been exporting for more than 10 years and have total exports above 25% of turnover, may still qualify for support if they are seeking to participate in a show where they have not taken part in the previous edition.

We believe these changes address issues ATOs have raised with us and will offer a more flexible TAP scheme to business at a difficult time.

We will issue revised TAP terms & conditions shortly to reflect the above amendments.

If you have any thoughts or questions on the above please contact your TAP Account Manager for advice.

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Director, TAP