



# **CARIBBEAN TOURISM ORGANIZATION**

## **VISITOR SURVEY**

### **OPERATIONS MANUAL**

# *Visitor Survey*

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

### For Survey Staff only

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY

Tourism is an important industry with considerable potential for growth and development. Its major benefit is that of foreign exchange and employment generation. In order to maximize these benefits, information about the industry must be available for planning and decision-making. The cruise passenger survey provides some of this information by cruise visitors when they are about to leave the country. The survey is designed to determine why visitors chose the country as their destination, if they spent any money, how much, what they spent that money on and whether the visit was up to their expectations.

The survey will normally be conducted at selected periods (rounds) over the entire year. There will be several such periods and each one will last at least one week. Rounds of the survey are usually selected in such a way as to capture activities in the Winter Season as well as the Summer Season separately. The survey will be done by self-completed questionnaire.

#### 1.1. *Who Completes the Questionnaire*

During the survey, visitors should complete questionnaires before they leave the country (e.g. at cruise ship ports).

**FOR EACH FAMILY:** Only one person in the family group (spending party) should complete the questionnaire.

**FOR INDIVIDUALS:** Each person must complete a questionnaire when not travelling with immediate family.

## ***1.2. Identifying the Visitor***

It is extremely important that **questionnaires are distributed to cover all visitors** included in the sample during the survey periods. To do this successfully the visitor must be properly identified.

There are three characteristics that distinguish visitors from other departing passengers. These are: -

### **(a) Country of Residence**

All visitors will be permanently residents outside of the country. Note that the emphasis here is on *residence*. In this respect, nationals who permanently reside abroad and make a visit are included as visitors.

### **(b) Reason for visit**

Among reasons why persons may visit are:-

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| - vacation/holiday          | - accompany family/friends |
| - recreation                | - honeymoon                |
| - entertainment             | - prize/ incentive trip    |
| - business/ company retreat | - family reunion           |

### **(c) Length of Stay**

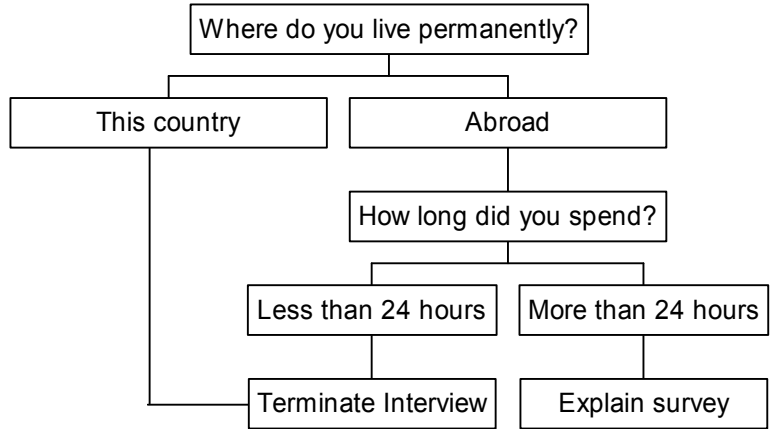
Stay-over visitors spend periods greater than 24 hours but not exceeding 365 days at the destination  
Cruise visitors arrive by ship and spend periods not exceeding 24 hours at the destination.

**NOTE:** Departing passengers must satisfy the criteria of residence (a) and length of stay (c) described above to be eligible for interview.

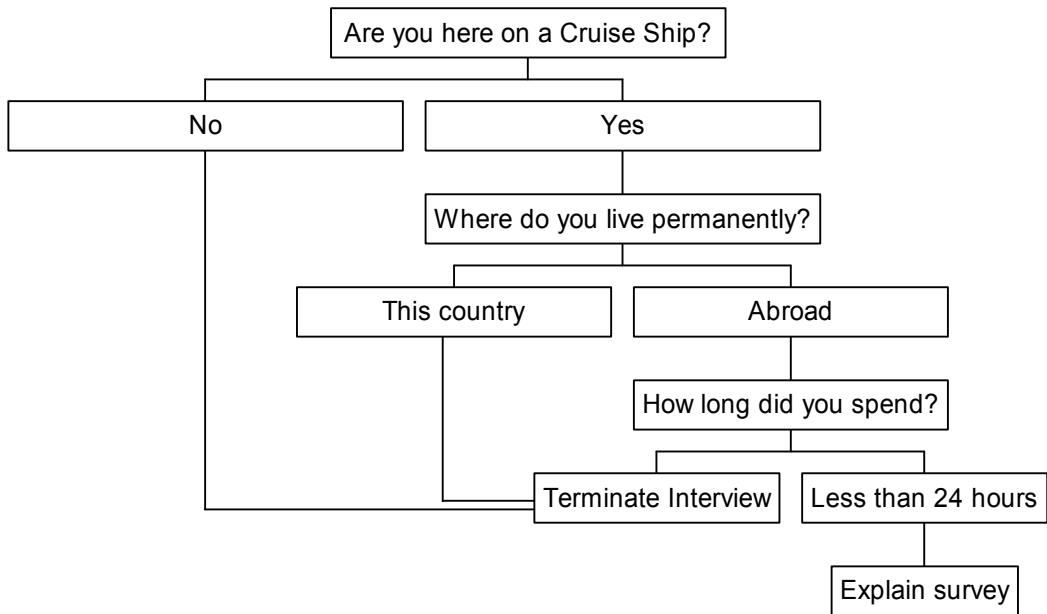
# IDENTIFYING THE VISITOR

This procedure could be used when you are *not* sure whether the departing passenger is a visitor.

## Identifying the Stayover Visitor



## Identifying the Cruise Visitor



### ***1.3. Distributing the Questionnaire***

In order to ensure that the survey is successful: -

- (a) All visitors falling into the sample must be handed a questionnaire

Visitors are not always easily identifiable. This will be particularly the case with visitors from other parts of the Caribbean or nationals of the country who live abroad.

Where you are not sure whether an individual is a visitor, ask the questions on the preceding page so that you can decide whether he should be given a questionnaire.

- (b) The questionnaire must be handed out early enough to allow time for completion.
- (c) All completed questionnaires must be collected and properly stored.
- (d) You must be capable of answering any questions about the purpose or content of the survey that may be asked.

### ***1.4. Response to the Survey***

To better guarantee the success of the survey, you must try to ensure that as many departing visitors as possible complete their questionnaires.

Many visitors will complete the questionnaire readily, regarding it as an opportunity to articulate their experiences. Others will not be so keen and will need to be convinced. Generally, reluctant respondents are unsure of the **PURPOSE** of the survey. They will want to know **WHY** the information is required and **HOW** it will be used.

**IF YOU CAN IMPRESS THEM ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SURVEY AND HOW IT WILL BE USED TO DEVELOP A BETTER PRODUCT AS WELL AS TO ASSURE THEM THAT THEIR RESPONSES WILL BE TREATED WITH THE UTMOST CONFIDENCE, YOU WILL WIN MANY CONVERTS!**

Experience has shown that visitors from some countries respond more readily than others. Americans, for example, generally have higher response rates than Europeans. Yet the information collected from the survey must be representative of all visitors. Otherwise the results will be biased. You must make a special effort, therefore, to obtain the cooperation of visitors of all nationalities.

## **2. THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The questionnaire is broadly divided into four sections as follows:-

- (a) Background information
- (b) Motivation
- (c) Expenditure
- (d) Satisfaction
- (e) Household Income

### ***2.1. Background Information***

This section will provide information which, when linked to responses in the other sections, will make the analysis of the data more meaningful.

The questions in this section are largely self-explanatory. The main points to remember are:-

***Question 2:*** "Where do you live permanently?"

If the visitor is from the USA, the state in which he lives should also be given. Similarly the province should be given by visitors from CANADA and the country by visitors from EUROPE, the CARIBBEAN and OTHER COUNTRIES.

***Question 3:*** "Number of times visited before"

The "number of times visited before" should not be included in the current visit. For example, if the current visit is the third one, the "number of times visited before" should be two (2).

***Question 4:***

### ***2.2. Motivation***

The information on motivation is particularly useful for planning and developing strategies to market the destination.

***Question 7:*** "Main source of information"

If the "main source of information" is NEWSPAPER or MAGAZINE then the visitor should *also* indicate whether the source was an ARTICLE or an ADVERTISEMENT.

### **2.3. Expenditure**

The questions in this section are central to the survey. This information will provide an estimate of the contribution tourism makes to the country in terms of dollars.

**Question 16:** "Expenditure at the destination"

This question refers to the expenditure made by the visitor or his spending party/family group after arriving at the destination.

Part (a) refers to the total expenditure and should equate to the sum of the expenditures listed in part (b).

WHERE THE VISITOR IS UNABLE TO RECALL THE EXACT EXPENDITURE ON ANY ITEM IN PART (B), HE SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO GIVE HIS BEST ESTIMATE.

### **2.4. Satisfaction**

The section on satisfaction is intended to provide information on the quality of the tourist product as perceived by the visitor. The questions are largely self-explanatory and provide a natural climax to the investigation. The information provided will be useful in the process of product development.

**Question 17:** "Destination characteristics"

The visitor is required to respond to each of the items in this question.

**Question 19:** "Open-ended comments"

This space has been provided to give the visitor a chance to make any additional statements on the visit. For example, he may use it to qualify any of his earlier responses or he may address an aspect of his visit that has not been covered by the questionnaire.

### **3 EDITING**

The survey data will be processed using the computer. Editing and coding are important survey management activities that take place after the completed questionnaires have been handed in but before they can to be processed.

The major purpose of these activities is to ensure that the data to be processed are meaningful and complete.

#### ***3.1. Editing***

Editing comprises the examination of the completed questionnaires and the resolution of any obvious inaccuracies, omissions or other inconsistencies.

Editing the cruise survey questionnaire is a relatively straightforward task with the exception of the section on expenditure. The editing of the expenditure responses call for particular attention to be paid to ensuring that the arithmetic is correct. There must always be a balance between total expenditure and the sum of the individual items.

##### ***3.1.1 Invalid or Missing Responses***

Individual questions will occasionally not have a valid response. Reasons for this will include:-

- (i) An accidental or unavoidable omission
- (ii) An unclear response, for example ticking two boxes instead of one box, as should be the case.
- (iii) A deliberate decision by the visitor not to respond to the question.

Generally, the required action will be to insert a "not stated" code when there is no response. However, in a few cases, a more definite imputation can be made. For instance, where a visitor indicates that he and his party participated in organised tours and/or water sports but did not show corresponding expenditure in the detailed expenditure, an imputation is possible using information on tour and water sports costs from the respective ground tour and water sport operators. Where no expenditure was obviously incurred, 0 is entered rather than not stated.

### ***3.1.2. Inconsistencies***

In some cases, the answer to one question will not correspond with the answer to another question. These are called inconsistencies and can often be resolved by careful study of the questionnaire. Fortunately, the individual questions in the survey are seldom strongly related and inconsistent responses will be very few.

### ***3.1.3 Suggested Edits***

#### ***Cruise Ship:***

Where the ship is not stated for a particular questionnaire the batch of questionnaires surrounding it may provide a strong basis for deducing the correct ship.

#### ***Country & State/Province:***

The state or province given must be consistent with the country indicated.

#### ***Travel companion:***

If no response (or more than one response) is given to this question then clues that will facilitate an appropriate edit may be found in the “*persons in spending party*” question that appears later in the questionnaire.

#### ***Number of persons in your party (a) & number of persons coming ashore (b) – CRUISE ONLY:***

The number in part (b) of this question must never exceed that in part (a). If this appears on a completed questionnaire edit (b) to read the same as (a) except where (b) is consistent with the number in the “*persons in spending party*” question that appears later in the questionnaire. In the latter case, edit (a) to read (b).

#### ***First Visit & number of Previous Visits:***

If the response is ‘FIRST VISIT’ then number of previous visits must be “0” (zero).

However, if a number is written in (e.g. 4) when first visit is indicated, it may be more reasonable to edit the response to read ‘VISITED BEFORE’.

## **EXPENDITURE**

### **Editing Expenditure Responses**

The successful editing of expenditure by visitors will sometimes require the use of information additional to that given on the questionnaire

- Package operator brochures
- Local operators providing services, such as ground transportation, tours etc.
- Cruise line local representatives.

Package operator brochures will provide the special discount rates offered by various hotels in the destination. Rack rates can be obtained from the hotels' brochures.

These local operators will provide per capita costs of the specific services offered, such as the per head cost of various tours.

Cruise line representatives will be able to give further information on tours purchased on board ship and cost of any other services offered.

Expenditure data must be coded in U.S dollars. If a different currency has been used, it should be converted to U.S dollars. In different cases the characteristics of the visitor can prove useful. Obviously a visitor from the U.S is more likely to quote U.S dollars than a Canadian.

Check that the individual expenditure components add to total expenditure.

Visitors naturally recall their total expenditure more easily (and accurately) than the money spent on the individual components. Sometimes the total expenditure will be given without a breakdown. On other occasions the total given will not add to the sum of the individual components.

Rationalisation of these inconsistencies requires a good dose of commonsense. Always look out for obviously unreasonable replies. For example, it is unlikely that a person staying for a few hours would spend US\$8000 although this target can be easily reached in the areas of gambling, jewellery and crystal it will hardly ever be true for an individual item of tours, transportation, meals and drinks or communication. A frequent error is for respondents to inadvertently score say, \$8000 for \$80.00.

The information on total expenditure is useful even when there is no expenditure breakdown.

Where total expenditure as reported by the visitor does not add to the individual components on the questionnaire but the figures are nearly the same, use the reported total and adjust the individual items (usually the "other spending" figure) to make them equal.

Where the total expenditure figure is substantially different from the sum of the individual components and these cannot be reasonably imputed - for example by using supplementary package information - only the total expenditure figure should be coded.

## **4 CODING**

### **4.1 Coding Practices**

Coding is the process of translating the responses on the questionnaires into numerical format to facilitate processing by computer.

Each question has a fixed number of possible responses. Each response is associated with a specific code as outlined below.

The following rules must be followed when coding:-

- (a) Code with a red pen so that the code will be distinguishable from the information provided by the visitor.
- (b) Codes must be clearly and conspicuously written

### **4.2 Identification Code**

For control purposes, each questionnaire must be dated and numbered and these numbers should be in sequence for every round. This must be done before they are distributed to visitors for completion.

The identification code will be a five-digit number as follows: -

1997	(Jan. - April)	-	Round 1:	10001,10002,10003 etc.
	Winter	-	Round 2:	20001,20002,20003 etc.
1998	(May - Dec.)	-	Round 3:	30001,30002,30003 etc.
	Summer	-	Round 4:	40001,40002,40003 etc.

### **4.3 Coding The Questionnaire (Sample List of Codes)**

**Ship:** What is the name of your ship?  
(Enter codes from list of cruise liners)

Add more codes as list of ships increase.

**Country of Residence:** Where do you live permanently?

<b>Response</b>	<b>Code</b>
USA	1
OTHER COUNTRIES	(Enter code from list of country codes)
Not stated	99

COUNTRY (use list of country codes)  
STATE (use list of state codes for U.S.A.)  
PROVINCE (use list of province codes for Canada)

**Travel Companion:** With whom did you travel?

<b>Response</b>	<b>Code</b>
Alone	1
Spouse/Partner	2
Family	3
Group/Friends	4
Other	5
Not stated	9

**Travel Party (CRUISE ONLY):**

Excluding you, (a) how many persons are there in your party?  
(b) How many came ashore?

Circle number of persons given (a) and (b).

**First Visit:** Is this your First Visit to this country?

<b>Response</b>	<b>Code</b>
First visit	1
Visited Before	2
Not stated	9

(a) How many times before?

Circle the number given in the response. For example, if the visitor has visited the country two times before, the correct code is "2".

(b) Type of visits before?

Land-based	1
On cruise	2
Both	3
Not stated	9

Note: If this is the first visit, the code for "number of times visited" must be "0".

***Previous Caribbean Visit:*** Excluding this visit, have you visited any other country in the Caribbean before?

<b><i>Response</i></b>	<b><i>Code</i></b>
Yes	1
No	2
Not stated	9

(a) How many times before?

Circle the number given in the response. For example, if the visitor has visited the country two times before, the correct code is "2".

(b) Type of previous visits?

Land-based	1
On cruise	2
Both	3
Not stated	9

Note: If this is the first visit, the code for "number of times visited" must be "0".

***Activities:*** Which of the following did you participate in during your visit?

(Each activity must be treated separately)

<i>Response</i>	<i>Code</i>
Yes	1
No	2
Not stated	9

**Expenditure:** What was your total expenditure in this country?  
How much of this money did you spend on?

Enter each amount after ensuring that: -

**TOTAL EXPENDITURE** = the sum of the individual items

**Persons in spending party:** How many persons does this expenditure cover?

A very important question. Crosscheck with the “*Travel Companion*” question. Circle the number given.

**Willingness to return:** Would you come back to this country?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Code</i>
Definitely	1
Probably	2
Probably Not	3
Definitely Not	4
Not Stated	9

**Income Group:** What is your household income per year in US\$?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Code</i>
Under 25,000	1
25,000 - 40,000	2
40,001 - 60,000	3
60,001 - 80,000	4
80,001 - 100,000	5
Over 100,000	6

**Comments:** Please indicate below anything else you particularly liked or disliked about your visit to this country.

Type comments briefly and clearly.