



PRESS RELEASE
26 November 2009

Travel Counsellors immediately gets to work for Budget Travel affected customers

Leading independent travel company Travel Counsellors is offering help, advice and alternative travel arrangements to those travellers affected by the news that Budget Travel ceased trading yesterday.

Ireland's largest tour operator was officially wound up after a provisional liquidator was appointed at the High Court, with the loss of 172 jobs and the closure of 17 retail shops. A total of 747 people are on holiday abroad with the company, with thousands more customers affected by the news with future travel bookings.

As soon as the news broke, Travel Counsellors, which prides itself on offering the best possible levels of personal service to its customers, notified its agents so that they were aware of the situation and could offer advice and reassurance to any travellers affected by the collapse. As Travel Counsellors didn't actually deal with Budget none of its own clients were affected, however the company has put out a statement saying it is prepared to help anyone who has made a booking with the tour operator.

Travel Counsellors General Manager for Ireland Cathy Burke comments; "Whilst Budget Travel are bonded with the Commission for Aviation Regulation, meaning they should be able to get a refund for cancelled holidays, these customers will still be left without an alternative holiday. We want to let people know we are willing to help in any way we can, even if it is just advice on how to claim their refund, and can also offer alternative travel arrangements for those now left without a holiday."

The company will be offering support services to the people affected such as expert travel advice and helping them fill out their claim forms when seeking refunds for their holidays.

This unique level of customer service has enabled Travel Counsellors to buck the current economic trend as Ireland continues to see a growing number of travel shop closures across the country. Launched in the UK in 1994, Travel Counsellors is now the world's largest home-based travel company, which expanded into the Republic of Ireland in 2005 and now has 43 experienced travel professionals operating their own home-based travel businesses throughout the Republic with 28 in the North of Ireland. These agents have the flexibility and support to enable them to concentrate on giving their customers the highest levels of service and are available at a time to suit them.

Cathy Burke adds; "Customers want to book with an agent they can trust and in these uncertain times this is even more important. We take away the administration from our agents so that they can take the time to build relationships with their customers, getting to know them and tailor-making holidays to suit their needs. As a result whilst we have seen a lot of shop closures on the high street in recent months here in Ireland, with this most recent collapse of Budget Travel being a major loss within the industry, our agents continue to buck the trend because of the service and value for money they can provide. We urge any customers affected by the collapse of Budget Travel to get in touch with their local Travel Counsellor who will be able to advise and help them, whilst offering alternative travel arrangements for those left without a holiday."

People wanting to find their nearest Travel Counsellor can visit the company's website at www.travelcounsellors.ie.



ENDS

EDITOR'S NOTES: Travel Counsellors Ireland is licensed and bonded with the Commission for Aviation Regulation in Ireland – Travel Agents License No 621. Travel Counsellors Ltd is one of Europe's largest independent travel companies with turnover at the end of its last financial year (Oct 312009) of £260million (€291million). Founded by chairman David Speakman in 1994 it currently has over 1,100 travel consultants who work from home with the support of over 200 staff at the company's UK headquarters and overseas offices. The company operates in the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, South Africa, Australia, the US and Canada. Travel Counsellors Ireland was established in June 2005 and currently has 40 Personal Travel Counsellors in the Republic.

For further information contact:

Cathy Burke

Tel: 00 353 21 2309379

E-mail: cathy.burke@travelcounsellors.com