



## **Setting the Standards for Timeshare**

### **What is RDO?**

RDO (Resort Development Organisation) is the trade association for the timeshare and fractional industries across Europe. Its membership is made up of resort developers, exchange companies, trustees, management companies, resale companies and finance providers.

RDO members represent the best in European timeshare and are committed to high service standards and integrity. They are bound by a code of conduct and an independent arbitration scheme, providing levels of protection beyond those required by law.

### **What does RDO do?**

As well as promoting timeshare to the media and other opinion formers, RDO works with governments and consumer associations around Europe to ensure that the interests of timeshare companies **and** those of timeshare owners are safeguarded when new laws are introduced.

One of its key priorities is to help protect timeshare owners targeted by fraudsters operating on the fringes of the industry – usually bogus resale companies, holiday clubs or even self styled ‘class action’ schemes. These companies are becoming more and more prevalent and are causing owners to lose considerable sums of money.

Given the serious nature of the situation, in 2005 RDO appointed a former Spanish police inspector who works with the police around Europe, the European Consumer Centres and enforcement bodies such as Trading Standards with the ultimate goal of having fraudulent companies closed down.

As a result of RDO’s work with the authorities, over 97 fraudulent operators have ceased trading since 2005.

### **Look for the Logo**

The RDO logo is the sign of the best in timeshare and you should always check that a company is affiliated to RDO before you go ahead. Either go to our website [www.rdo.org](http://www.rdo.org) or contact our consumer services department on [info@rdo.org](mailto:info@rdo.org) to check out the credentials of a company.

### **What is the new Timeshare law?**

If you sign a contract in the EU, you are protected by a new Europe wide Directive (implementation date February 2011) that gives you the right to a 14 day cooling off period, during which time the seller is not entitled to take any form of payment. The good news is that this new law also covers **resales and holiday clubs**.

## **Working with Timeshare Owners**

RDO has always worked closely with UK based TATOC [www.tatoc.co.uk](http://www.tatoc.co.uk), (The Timeshare Association), the consumer association representing the interests of over a quarter of a million timeshare owners.

RDO and TATOC are currently collaborating on finding solutions to issues affecting owners, such as resale. Mindful of the pressure that the recession has placed on some owners, a working group is looking at ways in which to help those whose need to sell their ownership is pressing, for example the elderly, the infirm or those who have lost their jobs.

## **Owners rate their timeshare highly**

It may surprise you to learn that in an independent survey that RDO commissioned in 2008/9, it was established that not only are the vast majority of the 1.5 million European families that own timeshare happy with their holidays, almost three quarters say that timeshare is better than other self catering holidays. The guarantee of quality, destination choices and the range of facilities are quoted as reasons for buying as well as the credibility of the company.

So in spite of these figures, why is the press coverage sometimes negative? Although some news reflects legitimate issues of concern to owners, the vast majority of scare stories are in fact **not** about timeshare at all – unfortunately the press confuse timeshare with new holiday types, such as holiday clubs, considered by the EU Commission to be highly dubious.

Articles which show timeshare in a poor light are not only bad for the industry but for you too – so help spread the news that timeshare is a great way to take holidays! TATOC have set up a ‘Happy Holidays’ section on their website dedicated to spreading the good news about timeshare. Contact them for further information.

## **Why is RDO important to you?**

- We investigate fraudulent activity and work with the authorities to have companies closed down
- Our members are committed to high service standards and sign up to a code of conduct
- We offer a free complaint handling service to customers of our members
- We work with governments to bring in legislation that’s fair to you
- We inform the media about timeshare and the difference between it and holiday clubs
- With TATOC, we are spreading the good news about timeshare
- Our website offers comprehensive advice about buying and selling timeshare

For more information about RDO or timeshare in general, go to our website on [www.rdo.org](http://www.rdo.org) or [www.gotimeshare.org](http://www.gotimeshare.org) or contact us on [info@rdo.org](mailto:info@rdo.org)