

For information

Legislative Council Panel on Economic Services

Delineation of Roles between Tourism Commission and Hong Kong Tourist Association

Introduction

This paper sets out for Members' information the respective roles and division of responsibilities between the Tourism Commission and the Hong Kong Tourist Association (HKTA).

Background

2. At the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Economic Services held on 27 November 2000, we consulted Members on proposed amendments to the Hong Kong Tourist Association Ordinance. Members expressed interests to learn more about the delineation of roles between the Tourism Commission and the HKTA.

Establishment of Tourism Commission

3. The Tourism Commission was established in May 1999 in Economic Services Bureau, Government Secretariat. It is headed by the Commissioner for Tourism whose role is to provide a strong leadership and steer within Government in mapping out the tourism development policy and strategy; provide a focal point for liaison with the tourist industry and enhance co-ordination in developing tourism. The establishment of the Tourism Commission also addresses the strong demand from the tourism industry which experienced drastic reduction in visitors arrivals and tourism receipts in 1997 and 1998 for Government to help revive the tourism industry by providing the necessary dedicated leadership to guide future developments strategically.

4. In the course of considering views from the industry and before coming to a view on the establishment of the Tourism Commission, we had considered the feasibility and appropriateness of having the industry or the HKTA to assume the leading role as expected of the Commissioner. However, we concluded that there are many aspects of work which would best be performed by a government setup and led by a senior government official. For instance, it is only appropriate for Government to play a leading role in

reviewing, mapping out and implementing a tourism strategy, to co-ordinate action among policy bureaux and departments to take tourism initiatives forward, to process resource bids in support of such initiatives, to hold discussions with the Mainland authorities at a governmental level on co-operative measures and to take part in international governmental forums.

Role of Tourism Commission

5. The Tourism Commission is mainly responsible for formulating and co-ordinating implementation of policies, plans and strategies for tourism development. At the same time, it leads and coordinates the work of other Government bureaux and departments on policies and initiatives which have an impact on tourism development. Major areas of responsibility of the Tourism Commission include –

- (a) to formulate policies and overall strategy, in consultation with the HKTA and the tourist industry, in promoting the development of tourism in Hong Kong;
- (b) to consider the feasibility and carry out studies on new tourism attractions and facilities, and to arrange for implementation of specific proposals (e.g. The Hong Kong Disneyland, Tung Chung Cable Car System, International Wetland Park, and Central and Western District Enhancement Scheme) as applicable;
- (c) to provide pro-active inputs in the Government planning process and the implementation of projects that have an impact on tourism;
- (d) to explore and develop areas of improvements which may enhance the overall attractiveness of Hong Kong as a tourist destination;
- (e) to facilitate staging of world-class events to develop Hong Kong into the “Events Capital of Asia”;
- (f) to maintain liaison with Mainland authorities at a governmental level on co-operative measures and to take part in international governmental forums;
- (g) to regulate and enhance the service quality of travel agents; and
- (h) to work closely with the HKTA to ensure its best use of resources

and attend to its needs for Government support.

Role of HKTA

6. The HKTA has a distinctive role with emphasis on marketing and promoting Hong Kong as stipulated under the HKTA Ordinance. In late 1999, the Association completed a Strategic Organisation Review (SOR) on its role. The Review concluded that the principal role of the Association is to promote Hong Kong as a tourist destination, to enrich visitors' travel experience and to enhance Hong Kong's attractiveness through improving and developing new tourism itineraries and enhancing service standards in collaboration with the tourism industry. It should also steer away from activities such as event organization, tour operation, and fund management.

7. The SOR concluded that the HKTA should, first, boost efforts in promotion and marketing in future; and secondly, restructure the organisation and administrative framework to enhance support for its promotion work outside Hong Kong. The latter includes recommendations for expanding the size of the Board of Management and to abolish its membership system. The name of HKTA should also be amended to the "Hong Kong Tourism Board". We will introduce the Hong Kong Tourist Association (Amendment) Bill 2001 into the Legislative Council to implement the recommendations of the SOR.

8. The proposed objects of the Hong Kong Tourism Board would be updated as follows –

- (a) to endeavour to increase the contribution of tourism to Hong Kong;
- (b) to promote Hong Kong globally as a leading international city in Asia and a world class tourist destination;
- (c) to promote the improvement of facilities for visitors;
- (d) to support the Government in promoting to the community the importance of tourism;
- (e) to support, as appropriate, the activities of persons providing services for visitors to Hong Kong; and
- (f) to make recommendations to and advise the Chief Executive in relation to any measures which may be taken to further any of the

foregoing matters.

Conclusion

9. In further promoting tourism development in Hong Kong, the Tourism Commission and the HKTA perform distinctive but complementary roles. The working relationship have taken shape since the establishment of the Commission in May 1999. We have reached a consensus with the HKTA Board of Management on the delineation of roles as described above and will continue to work closely with the HKTA and the travel and tourism industry to further tourism development in Hong Kong.

Tourism Commission
Economic Services Bureau
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