

**Panel on Economic Services, Legislative Council
Meeting on 23 April 2007**

IV. Strengthening the protection for Mainland visitors

Measures by Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) to tighten regulation on registered shops

1. The TIC Board of Directors met on 17 April 2007 and agreed in principle the following points:

Registered shops

- (1) Registered shops must allow members of the public to have free access to their premises throughout their business hours, in order to enhance the transparency of their operation and facilitate inspections.
- (2) Demerits will be calculated according to the business location of a registered shop in order to prevent registered shops from shirking their responsibility by changing their names or closing down business. In other words, the demerits for a registered shop operating at the same location will be retained irrespective of such situations as change of ownership/name, unless the pre-existent shop has ceased business for more than one year.

Refund arrangements

- (3) Visitors are now required to make a refund request within 14 days after purchase. They will be allowed to do so within six months.
- (4) Currently, one of the conditions for visitors to be entitled to a refund is the return of the original packaging. Such a condition will be rescinded.

Demerit System for Registered Shops

- (5) A registered shop will be given 10 demerits if, within three months, the TIC, the Consumer Council (CC) and the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) have received a total of 10 visitor complaints against it, or there are 10 cases where it agrees to refund only after intervention by the TIC, the CC or the HKTB.
- (6) The TIC will make reference to the rules of the Quality Tourism Services

Scheme with a view to refining the receipt format for registered shops.

- (7) Whenever a registered shop is given any demerits, its information as well as the information of those Hong Kong receiving agents and mainland tour operators involved in the cases will be posted on the TIC website.
 - (8) The number of demerits imposable on registered shops which have breached their pledges will progressively increase.
2. At the 17 April 2007 meeting, the TIC Board decided to issue a directive to require members to observe the following rule:
- (9) Members are required to receive only mainland inbound tours organised by Authorised Travel Agencies for Outbound Travel by Chinese Citizens approved by the China National Tourism Administration.

19 April 2007