

**For Discussion
on 22 March 2004**

Legislative Council Panel on Economic Service

A Hospitable Hong Kong

PURPOSE

This paper reports on the Administration's efforts to promote hospitality in Hong Kong and sets out new initiatives which will be taken forward later this year to build on the success of previous efforts.

BACKGROUND

2. In his 2004 Budget Speech, the Financial Secretary stated that "We will also continue to promote a hospitable culture among those working in the tourism sector in particular, and all our citizens in general." The Administration attaches great importance to the promotion of a hospitality culture at the community level and to the enhancement of service quality generally. The Tourism Commission (TC) and the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) have organized a number of campaigns and projects since 1999 to promote a hospitality culture and quality service at both the trade and community levels.

Campaign to Promote a Hospitality Culture

3. To enhance public awareness of the importance of the tourism industry to the Hong Kong economy and to foster a hospitable culture in the community, the TC launched a territory-wide public education campaign, entitled "A Hospitable Hong Kong" (the Campaign), in 2001. The aim of the Campaign was to enhance community awareness of the importance of hospitality to the development of the tourism industry.

4. There are three key elements of the Campaign –

(a) The Hong Kong Young Ambassador Scheme was introduced

in 2001. It aims at introducing to the younger generation general basic knowledge of the tourism industry and encouraging them to organize or participate in activities that promote Hong Kong. We have currently 246 active Young Ambassadors to help spread the message of a hospitable culture in Hong Kong or overseas;

- (b) General publicity through the use of mass media to promote key hospitality concepts among the community. Launched in September 2001, advertisements were broadcast on major TV channels and public transportation network. A TV quiz game show was also produced and broadcast to arouse public understanding of the importance of hospitality to Hong Kong's tourism sector; and
- (c) A total of 2,500 education kits were produced and distributed to secondary schools and relevant youth organizations in December 2002. The kit serves to introduce the importance of hospitality and encourage youths to adopt suitable hospitality habits.

Projects to Promote Service Quality

5. The HKTB has launched two projects to promote service quality at the trade level. They are –

- (a) The Quality Tourism Services Scheme which aims to assist visitors and local customers to identify quality service providers, and to recognize the participating merchant's excellence in service and products. The scheme has stringent assessment criteria and a complaint resolution mechanism that enhances consumer protection. There are now nearly 1 000 accredited merchants representing 3 600 outlets; and
- (b) the Tourism Orientation Programme which aims to provide training and job opportunities to those who would like to join the tourism industry; and to provide a well-trained workforce for the industry. Since its inception in 2002, the Programme has trained nearly 300 Tourism Hosts.

Further details of the projects in paragraphs 4 and 5 above are set out in

Annex A.

NEW INITIATIVES

6. We propose to extend the “A Hospitable Hong Kong” Campaign (the Campaign) for two years at an estimated cost of HK\$12.8 million to achieve the objective as set out in the 2004 Budget Speech. A table setting out the projects under the Campaign with cost estimates is at Annex B.

(a) Hong Kong Young Ambassador Scheme

We plan to continue the running of the HKYAS for a further two years with an intake of about 200 YAs each year. The HKYAS has successfully built up the hospitality culture amongst participants who have in turn helped spread the message to their friends and peers. The continuation of the HKYAS will help to sustain youth awareness of the importance of a hospitality culture. The project will continue at an estimated cost of \$1.8 million.

(b) General Publicity Reaching the Community

In view of the positive feedback on the last API broadcast in January 2003, we plan to produce a new API at an estimated cost of \$1 million further to promote a hospitable culture in Hong Kong through TV broadcast and various media channels offered by public transportation networks. The new API will aim at sustaining the impact of the Campaign at the community level.

(c) Service Quality Seminars and Campaigns

We plan to conduct sector-specific seminars and campaigns in collaboration with the relevant services sectors to promote excellence in service quality. The seminars and campaigns will provide a direct channel to facilitate effective communications and exchanges of views among industry stakeholders, particularly among those who have direct contact with visitors. We have estimated a cost of \$5 million for the series of sector-specific seminars and campaigns.

(d) Service Quality Audit

We plan to conduct service quality audits in the hotel, travel and transport sectors at an estimated cost of \$5 million. In order to ensure that all sectors of the industry work towards achieving and maintaining the highest standards, it is necessary to take stock of

the situation in each sector. This will allow the industry to assess the standards already achieved, identify strengths and weaknesses in their performance and take steps to address the weak areas and build on the strong ones. We will also engage front line Government departments in this exercise. This will allow for upgrading the service quality in our tourism industry as a whole. This is a key recommendation arising from recent deliberations in the Tourism Strategy Group chaired by the Commissioner for Tourism.

Projects to Enhance Service Quality

7. The HKTB will continue with the following projects as part of their ongoing efforts to enhance service quality and make Hong Kong a more tourist-friendly and preferred destination for business and leisure.

Quality Tourism Services Scheme

8. To maximize the reach of the Scheme to visitors, publicity for the Scheme will be stepped up both overseas and in Hong Kong. The objectives are to reinforce the quality destination image of Hong Kong in source markets, to increase visitors' awareness of the Scheme prior to their departure and on arrival in Hong Kong, and to encourage higher spending in Hong Kong in order to maximize tourism's economic contribution to Hong Kong. In particular, the HKTB will launch a Visitor Awareness Programme in the Mainland, Japan and Korea; a Visitor Patronage Stimulation Programme to maximize visitors' spending at QTS-accredited merchants; and a Merchant Booster Programme to drive merchant recruitment.

Tourism Orientation Programme

9. Since its implementation in 2002, feedback from TOP Partners/ Supporters including retailers, travel agents and hotels has been very positive. The Tourism Hosts (THs) are given a valuable opportunity to gain hands-on experience through job attachment to different positions and of different work nature in the trade. Both the TOP partners and THs support the value of the TOP as an effective means to develop a pool of people with relevant experience to support the further growth of the industry. The HKTB plans to extend the Programme for two more years.

WAY FORWARD

10. We plan to seek Finance Committee's funding approval in April 2004 to extend the "A Hospitable Hong Kong" Campaign for two years as outlined in paragraph 6 above.

**Tourism Commission
Economic Development and Labour Bureau
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Annex A

**Projects under the “Hospitable Hong Kong” Campaign
and the Campaign to Promote Service Quality**

“A Hospitable Hong Kong” Campaign

Project	Launch Year	Brief Description
Hong Kong Young Ambassador Scheme (HKYAS)	September 2001	<p>The Tourism Commission (TC) introduced the HKYAS to boost hospitality awareness amongst youths. Participants were given intensive training during the summer and given the opportunity to participate in tourism promotion activities. They were also stationed at various tourist spots to introduce the tourist attractions and to assist tourists, participated in mega events organized by the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), and organized promotional activities in their schools.</p> <p>A total of 484 participants, who were local students or Hong Kong students at overseas secondary and tertiary institutes, successfully completed training and were appointed as Young Ambassadors (YAs) between 2001 and 2003. They have contributed over 2 040 stationing service hours, organized 228 promotional activities locally and 61 overseas, and participated in 17 mega events, such as New Year Parades and Rugby Sevens. Currently, we have 246 active YAs to help spread the message of a hospitable culture in Hong Kong or overseas.</p>
General Publicity Reaching the Community	September 2001	<p>The TC has used the mass media effectively to maximize the publicity impact at the community level. A TV Quiz Game Show named “Be a Good Host Hunt” was broadcast on TVB every Sunday night from September to December 2001. The average rating points for this show were 19.6 representing around 1,300,000 viewers, while the average station sharing percentage is 75.8%. This Quiz Show</p>

		<p>generated considerable interest not just among its viewers but also the press. A number of spin-off articles on the show appeared in newspapers and magazines.</p> <p>A short TV series comprising eight episodes featuring visitors' experience in Hong Kong was broadcast on major TV channels in Hong Kong as APIs and some prominent locations, such as TV screens at World Trade Centre, the Kowloon Motor Bus Customer Service Centre at Star Ferry Terminal and MTR stations. The core message of the series is intended to encourage Hong Kong people to be hospitable to visitors, thereby, creating a friendly image for "Asia's World City". This series continues to be shown at the airport and in other locations.</p>
Education kit for secondary students	December 2002	<p>To enable the message of hospitality to reach a large population of young people, the TC has in consultation with the trade, the HKTB and the Education Department, designed and published 2,500 tourism education kits for distribution to all secondary schools and relevant youth organizations in December 2002. The kit serves as reference materials to assist classroom teaching and has a special element relating to extra-curricular activities. These education kits have all been distributed. A new game "Can I help you" was developed as part of the kit to make the learning experience more effective.</p>

Projects to Promote Service Quality

Project	Launch Year	Brief Description
Quality Tourism Service (QTS) Scheme	1999	<p>Launched by the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) in 1999, the QTS Scheme is an on-going effort to raise service standards in the tourism industry. The main objectives of the Scheme are to assist visitors and local customers to identify quality service providers, and to recognize the participating organization's excellence in service and products. The Scheme was enhanced and re-launched in December 2003 by strengthening the assessment criteria of the Scheme, enhancing consumer protection to visitors and streamlining the complaint handling system to further protect the interests of visitors. At the end of 2003, about 1 000 retail and restaurant merchants representing 3 600 outlets have received QTS accreditation.</p>
Tourism Orientation Programme (TOP)	April 2002	<p>To strengthen Hong Kong's image as a hospitable and welcoming city, and to nurture a professionally trained workforce, the HKTB launched the TOP in April 2002. This is a two-year programme funded by the Government, organized by the HKTB and overseen by an Advisory Group of leading Hong Kong tourism professionals. TOP is a structured orientation programme involving classroom and on-the-job training for participants serving as Tourism Hosts in the frontline of the tourism industry.</p> <p>The first year of the TOP was successfully completed in mid-2003 with 133 participants graduating as Tourism Hosts. More than 80 per cent have joined the industry after graduation; and a further 150 people are now undergoing training as part of the second year of the programme.</p>

Annex B

Projects under the “A Hospitable Hong Kong” Campaign

Projects	Estimated Cost (in HK\$ million)
Hong Kong Young Ambassador Scheme	1.8
Production and broadcast of a new TV API	1
Sector-specific seminars and campaigns promoting quality service	5
Service Quality Audit	5
Total estimated cost	12.8