

9 July 2011

To: Team 1
 Tourism Commission
 Commerce, Industry and Tourism Branch
 Commerce and Economic Development Bureau
 2nd floor, East Wing, Central Government Offices
 Lower Albert Road
 Central, Hong Kong.

Subject: Consultation Paper -
 Review of the Operation and Regulatory Framework of
 the Tourism Sector in Hong Kong

As a member of the public, I have the following views on the proposals set out in the above-mentioned consultation paper:-

- (1) First, I welcome and support this consultation paper. Government needs to bring in effective reform measures to the regulatory regime of the tourism sector in Hong Kong. Both the local Hong Kong residents and our visitors are confused with the different responsibilities of the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) and the Travel Agents Registry (TAR). Even the leaflets on tourism have not explained their different roles.
- (2) I prefer and support Option 3 (i.e. An independent statutory body as the regulatory authority). This will put tourism regulatory regime on a similar administrative platform like the existing real estate agents and the future insurance agents regulatory regime.
- (3) Your consultation paper has not mentioned about the current malpractice for travel agents to sell travel insurance to outbound travellers, when these agents may not have the proper insurance licence issued by the Insurance Authority. The staff selling the travel insurance will not be competent enough to explain the terms of the travel insurance policy to their customers. This seems to have happened in the Hong Kong travellers killed and wounded in Manila in 2010 unhappy incident. Some local travel agent companies even tie up travel insurance with their sales product of outbound travel tours, and make it compulsory for customers to purchase once they join the outbound tour. So far, TIC and TAR have done nothing and may be unable to resolve this issue of breaking up the tie between the travel insurance and the outbound tour, despite concerns expressed by the public and the Consumer Council. I hope with the reform of the regulatory regime, the new statutory body can address this problem of outbound tour tie-up compulsory with the travel insurance policy sold by that travel agent.

Thank you very much. Please acknowledge receipt of my submission, so that I can know that my comments are not wasted and my letter ^{not} thrown into a waste paper basket.

(MR. TING PING)