

**Legislative Council Question No. 20**  
(Written Reply)

Date of Sitting : 12 March 2003

Asked by : Hon Howard Young

Replied by : Secretary for Economic  
Development and Labour

**Question :**

It has been reported that, since 1 January this year, the Guangdong Provincial authority has implemented a new policy to allow temporary residents in eight cities of the Province to apply locally for visiting Hong Kong. However, they are not allowed to bring along their elderly parents whose permanent registered residence is not in these cities. When implementing this policy, some of these cities have imposed additional restrictions, such as a maximum of two visits to Hong Kong every year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether it has held discussions with the Central People's Government or the Guangdong provincial authorities about relaxing the above policy to allow temporary residents to bring along their elderly parents whose permanent registered residence is not in these cities to visit Hong Kong, and issuing instruction to lift the additional restrictions; if so, of the results of the discussions; if the policy will be relaxed and such instruction will be issued, of the effective date; if they will not, the reasons for that?

**Reply :**

Madam President,

The Government has been working with the Mainland authorities to adopt measures to facilitate Mainland visitors travelling to Hong Kong to further promote the tourism industry. Our liaison efforts have resulted in a number of improvements in recent years, including the extension of the validity period for business visit endorsements, the abolition of the quota system of the Hong Kong Group Tour Scheme, the increase in the number of Mainland travel agents authorized to organize group tours and allowing temporary residents in selected cities of Guangdong to apply at the local Guangdong authorities (i.e. in the city in Guangdong where they reside) to visit Hong Kong. We are discussing with the Mainland authorities concerned on details for Guangdong residents to visit Hong Kong in their personal capacity.

We have not discussed with the Mainland authorities concerned the issue of allowing temporary residents to bring along their elderly parents whose permanent registered residence is not in those designated cities to visit Hong Kong. In order to allow more flexibility to Mainland residents to visit Hong Kong, the SAR Government will discuss with the Mainland authorities the possibility of adopting more flexible arrangements regarding necessary exit/entry controls and visit endorsements.

- End -

Economic Development and Labour Bureau  
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