

LCQ13: Studies on tourism

Following is a written reply by the Secretary for Development, Mrs Carrie Lam, (in the absence of Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development) to a question by Dr Hon David Li in the Legislative Council today (June 4):

Question:

The Tourism Commission's web site shows that a number of studies on new tourism infrastructure were completed between 2003 and April 2006. No new study or public consultation exercise has been reported on the Commission's web site since then. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether, in the past three years, it had conducted:

- (a) any survey to find out the percentage of visitors who considered visiting tourism infrastructures which were built or inspired by the Government as the primary reason for coming to Hong Kong; if so, of the frequency, sample size, reliability and outcome of such surveys;
- (b) any value for money audit on the four tourism infrastructure projects (i.e. the Hong Kong Wetland Park, Ngong Ping 360, Hong Kong Disneyland and Phase II of A Symphony of Lights) which, according to the Tourism Commission's web site, were drivers of tourism growth; if so, of the outcome; and
- (c) any study to review the strategic positioning of Hong Kong as a popular tourist destination for mainland visitors; if so, of the primary attraction of Hong Kong to such visitors as indicated by the outcome of such studies?

Reply:

Madam President,

The Government attaches importance to engaging the tourism industry and the community in developing tourism projects. Consultants are engaged as and when necessary for professional and independent advice at different stages of project conception and implementation. Apart from developing tourism infrastructure, the Government embarks on a variety of experience enrichment initiatives like promotion of cultural tourism and hospitality programmes. We make use of different

engagement platforms, for example, the Tourism Strategy Group, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), the Travel Industry Council, theme-based workshops and public consultations, etc., to interact with stakeholders. Since April 2006, we have commissioned studies on Lei Yu Mun waterfront enhancement project, Aberdeen tourism project, as well as workshops on developing a piazza in Tsim Sha Tsui, the manpower requirement of MICE (meetings, incentive travels, conventions and exhibitions) sector, and various engagement and studies relating to the development of a new cruise terminal at Kai Tak. The outcomes of such consultancy studies and community/stakeholder engagement work are uploaded, from time to time, to the website of the Tourism Commission for public information. My reply to the three-part question is as follows -

(a) The Government has not conducted any survey to ascertain the percentage of visitors who visit Hong Kong because of specific tourist attractions, as tourists normally visit a place for a wide range of interests. That said, attractions or events can help build up a desire to visit a place. The HKTB's surveys show that visitors to Hong Kong are impressed by our advanced and modern infrastructure, cosmopolitan setting, exciting shopping and dining experience, hospitable ambience, a diversified portfolio of tourist attractions and, above all, our unique East-meets-West culture and lifestyle. With the completion of major tourism infrastructures like the Hong Kong Disneyland, the Hong Kong Wetland Park and Ngong Ping 360 in recent years, the HKTB's surveys show that the overall satisfaction rate of our visitors increased from 8.0 in 2005 to 8.2 in 2007, and the percentage of visitors who wish to revisit Hong Kong also increased from 85% in 2005 to 90% in 2007.

(b) The Government has not conducted value-for-money audits for the four major tourist attractions in question, but the HKTB from time to time conducts market surveys on the popularity of these tourist attractions. According to such surveys conducted in 2007, the Ocean Park, the Hong Kong Disneyland and "A Symphony of Lights" are all popular attractions for visitors. As for Ngong Ping 360, its patronage exceeded 600,000 in the first four months since its re-opening to the public on December 31, 2007. The Wetland Park caters for a niche market comprising nature and wetland conservation lovers. Over 500,000 people visited the Park in the past 12 months.

(c) The Government and the HKTB have been closely monitoring the latest trend of the major tourism markets, including the Mainland. We have been adopting different measures to obtain information for developing strategies, especially for tapping the tremendous growth of the Mainland market. These measures include engagement of

consultants, use of established consultative platforms, and regular liaison with the travel trade and other stakeholders. Furthermore, the Government maintains close and regular dialogue with relevant Mainland authorities on matters of mutual concern. Taking into account Mainland visitors' interests, market research on the travel pattern and relevant national policies, the HKTB has been making efforts to boost family and consumption visits, which are proved to be a success as reflected by the 13% growth in Mainland family visitors from 2005 to 2007.

Looking ahead, apart from developing tourism infrastructures and launching marketing campaigns, the Government, the HKTB and the travel trade will strive to promote honest and quality tourism, enrich our destination offerings, and improve the quality and variety of shopping and entertainment activities in Hong Kong, so as to make Hong Kong a preferred destination for Mainland visitors. Also riding on the popularity of cruise tourism, we are now developing a world class cruise terminal and are working with coastal Mainland cities in promoting cruise tourism.

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