

LCQ14: Sightseeing facilities in Aberdeen

Following is a written reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mrs Rita Lau, to a question by the Hon Paul Tse in the Legislative Council today (January 7):

Question:

As the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter is a popular tourist attraction, will the Government inform this Council:

(a) whether it knows the number of tourists who took sampan rides for sightseeing at the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter in each of the past three years;

(b) of the existing measures and plans to preserve the scenic attractions with traditional features at the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter and to keep the sea in the area clean; and

(c) whether it will provide additional facilities at the Aberdeen Promenade, such as building a cover for and providing seats at the pier, so that tourists will not be tormented by the scorching sun and lashing rain while waiting to board the vessels; if it will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

(a) We have not conducted any formal survey on the number of tourists who took sampan rides for sightseeing at the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter. However, according to the departing passenger surveys conducted by the Hong Kong Tourism Board, sampan rides for sightseeing at the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter are more popular among visitors from long-haul markets such as America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

(b) The Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter retains some features of a traditional fishing port, and the Government has all along supported the local community in organising traditional activities relevant to this status. For instance, the dragon boat races at the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter during the Dragon Boat Festival attract more than 1,000

participants and spectators every year. In 2007, the local community organised an event called "Wedding FUN at Southern District Fishing Port" to introduce the lifestyle and marriage customs of fishing folks. Apart from assisting in organising the activities, relevant government departments will also provide free venues to facilitate their smooth operation.

Meanwhile, the government departments concerned have taken various measures to keep the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter clean. For instance, the Marine Department has employed cleansing contractors to collect marine refuse at the typhoon shelter, conducted regular cleansing operations jointly with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to clean up garbage washed up onto the shore, prosecuted offenders of marine littering, provided free refuse collection service to vessels at the typhoon shelter as well as promoted the message of keeping the sea clean to the floating community. In parallel, the Environmental Protection Department has regularly monitored the water quality of the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter and provided sewage disposal facilities in Aberdeen to prevent sewage inflow to the waters of the typhoon shelter.

(c) For the convenience of tourists who take sampan rides for sightseeing at the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter, the Southern District Office has erected visitor signage at different spots to show visitors locations where they can take sampan rides for sightseeing, and built a cover and provided seats along Kwun Hoi Path, Aberdeen so that visitors to the place or tourists waiting to board the sampans can take a rest. In addition, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) is making arrangements to provide more seats in the Aberdeen Promenade and Kwun Hoi Path Sitting-out Area for visitors who go sightseeing in the vicinity or wait to board the sampans at the embarking/disembarking points. To further enhance the facilities, the LCSD also plans to obtain funding approval from the District Council in 2009 for additional pergolas at the Sitting-out Area.

Ends/Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Issued at HKT 14:31