

LCQ8: Renewal of tourist guide pass

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Following is a written reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mrs Rita Lau, to a question by the Hon Ip Wai-ming in the Legislative Council meeting today (July 8):

Question:

Recently, quite a number of tourist guides have relayed to me their discontent that the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) requires them to take an examination again when renewing their tourist guide passes. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether it knows:

(a) if the questions of the aforesaid examination are the same every time; if so, of the reasons for requiring tourist guides to take the examination again when renewing their passes; and

(b) if TIC will consider cancelling the aforesaid examination;

(i) if it will, of the timetable; as well as whether it will set other new requirements for renewing the passes; if so, whether it will fully consult the tourist guides in advance; if it will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(ii) if it will not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

Under the Continuing Professional Development Scheme for Tourist Guides implemented by the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) since 2007, Tourist Guide Pass holders are required to pass the Hong Kong Knowledge Quiz, attend theme

seminars and complete not less than 12 hours of self-selected training courses on tourism. The Scheme aims at enhancing the professional knowledge of tourist guides and encouraging them to keep abreast of the latest developments of Hong Kong so as to provide high-quality guide service to visitors. Tourist guides are required to renew their Pass every three years, and have to fulfil the above requirements from the second renewal onwards. My reply to the two-part question is as follows:

(a) The Quiz questions are selected randomly from the TIC's database. Hence the Quiz is different every time. The database is updated from time to time to reflect the latest developments in Hong Kong. The TIC provides information in the database to tourist guides for revision purposes.

(b) Recently some tourist guides have proposed to the TIC to cancel the Hong Kong Knowledge Quiz. After careful consideration of the justifications of the proposal, views of stakeholders and other feasible options, the Working Group on Continuing Professional Development Scheme of the TIC (which comprises non-trade members, tutors of tourist guide courses as well as representatives of major tourist guide associations, the Vocational Training Council and the Government) takes the initial view that tourist guides could be given the option to either take courses or sit for the Quiz to fulfil the objective of encouraging the guides to constantly equip themselves with up-to-date knowledge of Hong Kong. The Working Group is drawing up the implementation details for submission to the Training Committee and Board of Directors of the TIC for approval shortly.

Ends/Wednesday, July 8, 2009

Issued at HKT 12:26