

LCQ8: Encouraging producers of overseas movies and television programmes to conduct location filming in Hong Kong

Following is a question by the Hon Yiu Si-wing and a written reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Gregory So, in the Legislative Council today (May 17):

Question:

The Chief Executive indicated in the 2017 Policy Address that "the Government will, from this year, organise Belt and Road promotional tours to countries with market potential, such as Iran, Indonesia, Malaysia and India, with a view to attracting film producers to come to Hong Kong for post-production and location filming and production facilitation services". Some members of the tourism industry have pointed out that producers of overseas movies and television dramas and programmes (movie/TV works) conducting location filming in Hong Kong will help promote Hong Kong's scenery to overseas audiences, thus alluring them to tour Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows the details of the overseas movie/TV works which involved location filming in Hong Kong in each of the past five years, including (i) the titles of the works, (ii) the places where the works were produced, (iii) the countries/places where the works were distributed/broadcast and (iv) numbers of viewers (set out in a table);

(2) of the assistance provided by the authorities to the producers of the movie/TV works mentioned in (1), and the public expenditure involved;

(3) given that in recent years, the filming locations in Taiwan, South Korea and New Zealand of some popular movie/TV works have been developed into tourist attractions, whether the authorities have examined the factors contributing to the success of those examples, and taken the initiative to communicate with the authorities of the relevant countries/places to learn from their experience so as to step up Hong Kong's efforts in this respect; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(4) whether the authorities have drawn up any specific work plans for the coming

three years to attract more producers of overseas movie/TV works to conduct location filming in Hong Kong, with a view to promoting Hong Kong's tourism industry; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Government all along attaches importance to the work of tourism promotion and has been promoting through the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) the diverse tourism appeals and travel experiences offered by Hong Kong through different channels, including television and digital marketing, social media and public relations initiatives. The HKTB has been proactively inviting international and regional television networks and major TV channels in source markets to film in Hong Kong and has been providing support for movie shooting in Hong Kong to generate international exposure of the city through the extensive reach and influence of television and films. One recent example is the Hollywood film "Ghost in the Shell" showed in Hong Kong theatres in March 2017. Create Hong Kong (CreateHK) of the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB) also renders support services to non-local film and television programme production crews.

A consolidated reply to the questions raised by Hon Yiu Si-wing is as follows:

(1) and (2) The HKTB provides different types of support according to the requirements of the production companies, such as providing advice on filming scenes and locations, liaising with venue providers, assisting in the application of permits for location shooting, and arranging accommodation and transportation for production crews if necessary. The HKTB's efforts in inviting media and production houses to film in Hong Kong and providing the necessary support is jointly undertaken by various departments at its head office and worldwide offices. The HKTB does not have the breakdown of the related expenditure separately.

At the same time, CreateHK also renders support services to the non-local film and television programme production crews. Such services include providing production crews with information and recommendations on filming locations; arranging filming location scouting by production crews; applying for necessary approvals or permits for production crews; and liaising with the relevant government departments on matters relating to lane/road closure and parking of filming vehicles. Supporting

location filming in Hong Kong is part of CreateHK's regular duties. The expenditure involved, which mainly concerns emoluments of the staff concerned, has been included in the overall expenditure of the Communications and Creative Industries Branch of CEDB.

The lists of film/television works which conduct location filming in Hong Kong that received support services rendered by the HKTB and CreateHK in the past five years are at Annex 1 and Annex 2 respectively. As the method on counting the number of viewers varies among different television channels, and the box office earnings have not been provided by the film companies, the HKTB and CreateHK are unable to provide the exact amount of viewers of TV works and box office earnings of the respective films.

(3) and (4) We understand that overseas destinations have been making use of TV programmes and films to promote tourism. In fact, the HKTB has all along been working proactively on this front. In order to maximise the promotion effectiveness, in recent years the HKTB has mainly invited regional television channels which cover various source markets to promote Hong Kong's diverse experiences. In response to media trends in source markets and local consumer preferences, the HKTB strategically invites different types of high-rated TV shows to film in Hong Kong. For instance, the HKTB has invited the Mainland and Korean reality shows to film in Hong Kong, as they enjoy great popularity in both markets. For the Taiwan market, travel and food programmes, as well as TV dramas have been invited. For Indian market, the HKTB has also invited famous Indian TV drama series to use Hong Kong as a setting to showcase the city's diverse tourism appeal.

Apart from driving international exposure, the HKTB also helps generate business opportunities for tourism industry by promoting the tourism products featuring filming locations in Hong Kong. For example, in 2015, the HKTB collaborated with the movie company, local attractions and travel agents to introduce itineraries that cover scenes featured in the Mainland film "Lost in Hong Kong". Besides, the HKTB also joins hands with local travel trade under the New Tour Product Development Scheme to promote some brand new movie-themed tour products, such as tours guided by veteran film critics and local movie lovers to visit locations featured in classic Hong Kong films.

In 2017-18, the HKTB will continue to invite more TV programmes and production houses to film in Hong Kong. In fact, the US Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)

already came to Hong Kong for travelogue filming in February 2017 and the Discovery TLC will shoot another TV programme here later this year. The HKTB will continue to encourage international and regional television channels to film in Hong Kong and will provide the necessary support, with a view to promoting Hong Kong's diverse tourism appeal to overseas audience through television and films.

Ends/Wednesday, May 17, 2017

Issued at HKT 15:43