

## **Measures for National Day Golden Week**

### **(1) Arrangements for immigration clearance at Boundary Control Points (BCPs)**

- ✧ Counters at Lok Ma Chau (LMC) will be increased from 35 to 50. Major improvement works at LMC will be completed by the end of September.
- ✧ Immigration Department (ImmD) will deploy 335 staff to various Boundary Control Points (BCP). “Expeditious clearance system” and “optical character recognition reader” will be introduced at busier BCPs to shorten the clearance process and increase the handling capacity by 10%.
- ✧ ImmD has conducted briefing sessions for travel agents and familiarization visits to Lo Wu and LMC will be arranged to ensure that they understand the clearance procedures and familiarize themselves with the BCPs environment.
- ✧ To facilitate clearance, ImmD will set up designated counters at Arrival Hall at Lo Wu BCP for clearance of tour groups and individual travellers from Mainland, and set up a waiting area behind the counters.
- ✧ A Joint Command Centre (manned by ImmD, Police, Custom & Excise Department, Transport Department and Tourism Commission) will be activated during Golden Week to monitor the visitor flow and traffic situation at land BCPs and to take prompt action if necessary.

### **(2) Coordinated facilities and arrangements**

#### **(a) Transportation**

##### **Cross Boundary Coach Service**

- ✧ To cope with the demand of visitors, TD has issued 22 and 52 ad hoc quotas for cross-boundary coach service at Man Kam To (MKT) and Sha Tau Kok (STK) for three months. 2,960 additional passengers can be carried starting from 1 September.

- ✧ TD will issue an additional 250, 40 and 60 ad hoc quotas for cross boundary coach services in LMC, MKT and STK respectively during the Golden Week. It is expected to increase the passenger capacity by about 14,000.
- ✧ TD has requested the cross boundary coach operators to facilitate a smooth traffic at the control points. The cross-boundary coach operators will deploy uniformed staff at the LMC BCP to provide assistance to passengers and facilitate the operation of the coach services to reduce the stacking time of coaches at the control point.

#### LMC-Huanggang Shuttle Buses (Yellow Buses)

- ✧ Two additional buses will be added to the service fleet starting from end September 2003, increasing passenger capacity by about 14% from 1,860 to 2,112 per hour per direction. Additional buses can be deployed to raise the peak capacity by a further 12% per hour per direction if necessary.
- ✧ A bus gate will be provided at the San Tin Public Transport Interchange (PTI) to allow the Yellow Buses to leave the PTI directly, which shortens the journey time and improves the circulation of buses within the PTI.
- ✧ When the passenger queue at the San Tin PTI exceeds a certain limit, TD will issue radio announcement to advise prospective passengers to use other transport modes (e.g. KCRC East Rail) to cross the boundary. TD will also stop all feeder buses and green minibuses to San Tin PTI to avoid overcrowding.

#### Cross-boundary ferries

- ✧ MD has already approved a total of 415 sailings during the Golden Week, a 20% increase from 2002 (346 sailings). The berthing capacity can accommodate at least 50 extra sailings each at Macau Ferry Terminal and China Ferry Terminal.
- ✧ Cross boundary transit ferry will be in service starting from 29 September, 16 times a day (carrying about 4,800 passengers), from Shenzhen, Shekou

and Dongguan to Chek Lap Kok Airport, which assists the diversion of transit passengers from Lok Ma Chau.

#### KCRC East Rail

- ✧ KCRC East Rail currently operates 10-11 trains to Lo Wu per hour which carry a maximum of 37,500 – 41,250 passengers. KCRC will increase the frequency of Lo Wu service to a maximum of 14 trains per hour per direction during the Golden Week, increasing the handling capacity to 52,500.

#### Inter-city Through train

- ✧ With effect from 1 September 2003, the customs and immigration procedures for passengers of Beijing–Kowloon and Shanghai–Kowloon Through trains have been simplified. Passengers were previously required to alight at Dongguan (Chang Ping) station for immigration clearance. Starting from 1 September 2003, Mainland officers will perform immigration clearance on board the trains at Guangzhou East Station.

#### Other transportation arrangements

- ✧ TD will activate, if necessary, its round-the-clock Emergency Transport Coordination Centre to liaise with relevant departments and take necessary actions, such as broadcasting messages to the public, to deal with emergency.

#### **(b) Hotel Accommodation**

- ✧ TIC has reminded the travel agents to ensure that group tours could only be received after hotel accommodation had been confirmed.
- ✧ TIC, Federation of Hong Kong Hotel Owners (FHKHO) and Hong Kong Hotels Association (HKHA) have established a coordination mechanism to follow up on issues between individual hotels and travel agents and tackle hotel room allocation problems, to ensure appropriate accommodation arrangement for visitors.

### **(c) Coordination with travel agents**

- ✧ Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) has informed ImmD the number of tour group arrivals during the Golden Week to facilitate ImmD to evaluate the situation and make necessary staff deployment.
- ✧ TIC has reminded travel agents to receive tour groups at BCPs on time to ensure smooth visitor flow.
- ✧ TIC has requested their members to distribute arrival cards and health declaration forms to mainland tour group leaders in advance so that the group visitors can complete the form prior to arrival at the counter to speed up clearance process. Health declaration forms can now be downloaded at [www.info.gov.hk/info/sars/c\\_tourist.htm](http://www.info.gov.hk/info/sars/c_tourist.htm) .
- ✧ Tour groups are requested, via TIC, to cross the boundary through Lo Wu BCP between 1 and 4 October, with a view to alleviate the burden at LMC BCP.

### **(d) Crowd Control**

- ✧ The trade has been requested to coordinate amongst themselves in order to avoid bunching group tours at popular tourist spots.
- ✧ Police will step up patrol in the tourist areas to maintain law and order.

### **(3) Promotions for Individual Visit Scheme**

- ✧ TB will reinforce the promotion at cities where Individual Visit Scheme was introduced.
- ✧ The “Things-to-know before departure to Hong Kong for Mainland visitors as individual travelers” leaflets have been distributed to relevant Mainland authorities to assist visitors in arranging their itinerary.

#### **(4) Information Dissemination**

- ✧ Between 24 September and 7 October, ImmD will upload daily arrival statistics on their website. Such information will also be hyperlinked to the HKTB's homepage <discoverhongkong.com> and a joint website with Mainland and Macau tourism authorities <visitgd.com> for visitors' reference.
- ✧ The hotel trade will upload the present room booking status and the forecast occupancy rate for Golden Week onto the homepage of Hong Kong Hotels Association <www.hkha.org> for visitors' reference. Such information will also be hyperlinked to the HKTB's homepage.
- ✧ Related information has been communicated to the public through electronic media, e.g. information about Hong Kong entry ports, transportation arrangements and shopping tips etc, for visitors' reference in planning their trips.

#### **(5) Visitors' information service**

- ✧ Between 1 and 5 October, the operating hour of customer service hotline of HKTB and TIC will be extended to 9pm.
- ✧ A visitor information counter operated by TB will start operation in Lo Wu Train Station before the Golden Week.

#### **(6) Consumer Protection**

- ✧ TIC has reminded its members of the "100% Refund" Policy and will follow up the complaints against unsatisfactory services by travel agents.
- ✧ Tour guides are responsible for reminding visitors on the "100% Refund" Policy before bringing them to shop at their designated retailers.
- ✧ TB will set up promotion of the Quality Tourism Service Scheme.
- ✧ Police will step up patrol at tourist shopping areas and distribute consumer protection reminder leaflets at shopping areas in the vicinity of the

blacklisted shops. They will tender assistance to the visitors if necessary.

- ✧ Visitors joining local tours organised by licensed travel agents will be offered protection by TIC in the event of travel agent default and complaint on service quality

### **(7) Protection of visitors' health**

- ✧ To avoid re-surgence of SARS in Hong Kong, DH will continue to implement health screening measures, including health declaration and temperature screening at all control points. To enhance the existing disease surveillance system, Hong Kong will continue to maintain close contact with the World Health Organization (WHO) and overseas health authorities, and Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macau will notify each other on SARS and to exchange information on other infectious diseases. DH will also formulate tailor-made health instructions for different sectors of the community, including the tourism and hotel industries, and organize SARS-related training programmes for trade practitioners.
- ✧ TC has reminded the trade (TIC, HARTCO, FHKHO and HKHA) to comply with guidelines issued by Department of Health (DH) and take appropriate precautionary measures against SARS.
- ✧ DH has maintained close liaison with the travel trade. DH has arranged a special meeting with the trade representatives to follow up the implementation of the precautionary measures.
- ✧ Tour guides are requested to follow DH's guidelines to remind visitors the importance of good personal hygiene and prevention of transmitted diseases.

### **(8) Coordination with Guangdong Provincial authorities**

- ✧ A meeting on "Arrangement for Festival Visitors" between Border Commanders (Police and ImmD) and their Mainland counterparts were held recently to discuss and examine the problems of passenger flows at BCPs and will meet again before the Golden Week.

- ✧ The notification system between the Guangdong Provincial Tourism Administration (GPTA) and the Tourism Commission have been activated to enhance the liaison and communication between the two parties. We have maintained close liaison with GPTA and facilitate each other in respect of immigration clearance, resources management, dissemination of consumer protection information and travel tips, etc.

Ends.