

Measures for Labour Day Golden Week

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

- ✧ Immigration Department (ImmD) will deploy additional staff to various Boundary Control Points (BCP) to ensure smooth passenger flow.
- ✧ A Joint Command Centre (manned by ImmD, Police, and Custom & Excise Department) will be activated from April 29 – May 9 to monitor the visitor flow at land BCPs and to take prompt action if necessary.

(2) Protection of visitors' health

- ✧ To avoid re-surgence of SARS in Hong Kong, DH has been maintaining, and will continue to implement health screening measures, including health declaration and temperature screening at all control points.
- ✧ TC has reminded the trade to comply with guidelines issued by Department of Health (DH) and take appropriate precautionary measures to protect visitors' health.
- ✧ After Mainland health authority had notified of suspected cases of SARS being reported in Beijing and Anhui province, DH has immediately stepped up health control measures at the airport and Hung Hom (for throughtrain from Beijing) with effect from April 23. Port Health staff will visually inspect passengers disembarking from conveyances from affected areas for signs of SARS, and distribute to them health information leaflet and Health Alert Notice, reminding them to seek immediate medical attention if feverish or feeling sick. Health information leaflets will also be distributed to passengers departing to the affected areas. DH will closely monitor the situation, inform the tourism sectors on the latest developments and provide appropriate health advice.

(3) Arrangement of facilities

(a) Transportation

Cross Boundary Coach Service

- ✧ TD issued 75, 22 and 8 new regular cross-boundary coach quotas for Lok Ma Chau (LMC), Man Kam To (MKT) and Sha Tau Kok (STK) respectively in late January 2004, which increased the one-way passenger carrying capacity by 4 200 (assuming each coach can carry 40 passengers). TD will issue 250, 40 and 60 ad hoc quotas for cross-boundary coach services via LMC, MKT and STK respectively during the Labour Day Golden Week which will further increase the passenger carrying capacity by 14 000.

LMC-Huanggang Shuttle Buses (Yellow Buses)

- ✧ The Yellow Buses will deploy additional buses and increase service frequency, to meet increase in passenger demand. Depending on the actual demand, it can deploy 7 additional buses to raise the passenger capacity by 40% from about 1 800 to 2 500 per hour per direction.

Other transportation arrangements

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

(b) Hotel Accommodation

- ✧ Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) has reminded the travel agents to ensure that group tours only set off after hotel accommodation had been confirmed.
- ✧ TIC, Federation of Hong Kong Hotel Owners (FHKHO) and Hong

Kong Hotels Association (HKHA) will follow closely the established Good Business Practice which lays down key principles governing the early release of information by hotel on room charges, availability and allocation, cancellation policy, as well as deposit arrangements. The three industry organizations will also tackle hotel room allocation problems to ensure appropriate accommodation arrangement for visitors.

(c) Coordination with travel agents

- ✧ Tour groups are requested by ImmD to cross the boundary through Lo Wu BCP between April 30 and May 2, with a view to alleviate the burden at LMC BCP. TIC has issued notices to the travel agents to seek their cooperation.
- ✧ 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.

(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.

(4) Information Dissemination

- ✧ Between April 29 and May 9, ImmD will upload daily arrival statistics on their website. Such information will also be

hyperlinked to the Hong Kong Tourism Board's (HKTB) homepage <discoverhongkong.com> and a joint website with Mainland and Macau tourism authorities <visitgd.com> for visitors' reference.

- ✧ The hotel trade will upload the forecast occupancy rate for the Golden Week onto the HKHA's homepage <www.hkha.org> for visitors' reference. Such information will also be hyperlinked to the HKTB's homepage.

(5) Visitors' information service

- ✧ Between April 30 and May 2, the operating hours of customer service hotline of HKTB and TIC will be extended to 9 pm.
- ✧ HKTB will step up visitor services at all BCPs from April 30 – May 2. The operating hours of customer services counter at Lo Wu will be extended to 9 pm. Additional staff will be deployed at LMC from 8:00am to 4:00pm, at China Ferry Terminal, Macau Ferry Terminal, and Hung Hom from 10am to 6pm.
- ✧ HKTB's information leaflets on shopping and dining tips, with information about upcoming events and enhanced Quality Tourism Service (QTS) Scheme, will be prepared and additional HKTB staff will be deployed to distribute leaflets in various BCPs from Apr 26 to May 9.

(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.
- ✧ HKTB will step up promotion of the QTS Scheme.

- ✧ Police will step up patrol at tourist shopping areas and render assistance to the visitors if necessary.
- ✧ Visitors joining local tours organised by licensed travel agents will be offered assistance and followed up by TIC if there is any problem.

(7) Coordination with Guangdong Province

- ✧ A meeting on “Arrangement for Festival Visitors” between Border Commanders (Police, C&ED, ImmD) and their Mainland counterparts was held on 16 April to discuss and examine the problems of passenger flows at BCPs during the Labour Day Golden Week holidays.
- ✧ We have maintained close liaison with Guangdong Provincial Tourism Administration and will continue to facilitate each other in respect of immigration clearance, resources management, dissemination of consumer protection information and travel tips, etc.