

Joint operation against illegal tourist guides

A joint operation against suspected unlicensed travel agents and unaccredited tourist guides was conducted by Hong Kong Police, Immigration Department and the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) today (September 9). This is the second one within the past three weeks.

"The joint operation shows the Government's determination to curb unlicensed travel agents activities and unaccredited tourist guides, particularly illegal tourist guides," said a spokesman for the Tourism Commission.

The joint operation was conducted in the area around Wong Tai Sin Temple in Wong Tai Sin this morning, and continued in the vicinity of the Tai Shue Wan entrance of the Ocean Park in the afternoon. "These locations were selected because they are popular spots visited by inbound tour groups," the spokesman said.

The operation concluded in the late afternoon. During the whole operation, some 66 inbound tour groups were covered. No unlicensed travel agent or unaccredited tourist guide was found. There were two travel agents suspected to have employed two Hong Kong residents without valid "Tourist Guide Pass" to undertake the duties of tourist guides. The TIC is following up on these travel agents who have breached the relevant directives of the TIC. According to the record of the TIC, the two Hong Kong residents concerned have already completed the tourist guide training as required by the TIC but have yet to complete the accreditation procedures.

The spokesman said, "The joint operation, which lasted for 3.5 hours in total, has been smoothly conducted. We have also adopted all necessary measures to minimise inconvenience caused to the visitors and travel agents. To ensure the quality of the inbound tour groups, we will continue to take appropriate measures to eradicate activities of unlicensed travel agents, unaccredited tourist guides and illegal tourist guides."

During the operation, staff of the TIC verified the identity of tourist guides to ascertain if they are holders of valid "Tourist Guide Pass" issued by the TIC. If the tourist guide was found to be a non-Hong Kong resident working as a

tourist guide, they were referred to the Immigration Officers at the spot for further investigation. For suspected unlicensed travel agents, they were referred to the Police for investigation once they were verified by the Travel Agents Registry to be unlicensed ones.

Tourism Commission
Economic Development and Labour Bureau

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