

## Commissioner for Tourism attends Seatrade All Asia Cruise Convention in Shanghai

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The Commissioner for Tourism, Mr Philip Yung, attended the 3rd Seatrade All Asia Cruise Convention, being held in Shanghai from September 26 to 28.

Speaking at the Convention today (September 27), Mr Yung updated cruise trade representatives on the development of the new cruise terminal in Hong Kong. He highlighted Hong Kong's advantages as a cruise hub in the Asia-Pacific region and the opportunities arising from the opening of the new cruise terminal in Hong Kong for developing new itineraries in the region.

"The rising demand for cruise travel from the Mainland is something that no cruise operator should overlook. In 2011, Hong Kong received more than 500,000 Mainland visitors taking cruises from our port. Meanwhile, the number of cruise ships received by the ports on the Mainland has increased by 17.5 per cent in 2011, reaching over 260 calls. We are keen to see more cruise operators catch this trend and deploy more ships to the region. Being a regional cruise hub, Hong Kong definitely stands to benefit from the growing demand for cruise travel on the Mainland," said Mr Yung.

Mr Yung introduced to the participants of the Convention the policy announced by the Central Government in late June this year that Mainland tour groups taking cruises from Hong Kong to Taiwan could visit Japan or Korea in the same cruise journey before returning to the Mainland. He pointed out that the policy would encourage cruise operators to offer more diverse itineraries and attract more Mainland tourists to take cruises from Hong Kong.

Mr Yung also informed the delegates that the construction works at the new cruise terminal are making good progress, and the cruise terminal building and the first berth are planned to be commissioned in mid-2013. In addition, the well-established Ocean Terminal has had its lease renewed. Its cruise facilities will be enhanced, providing more efficient service to passengers.

The Seatrade All Asia Cruise Convention is the most established cruise event in Asia. The Convention this year has been attended by industry representatives from over 30 countries and regions in the world. The Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) has set up an exhibition booth at the Convention to showcase the design of the new cruise terminal as well as Hong Kong's position as a must-visit destination.

In the margins of the Convention, Mr Yung met with the senior management of a number of major cruise companies to discuss the potential of the cruise market in the region and ship deployment to Hong Kong.

Accompanying Mr Yung to attend the Convention were the Executive Director of the HKTB, Mr Anthony Lau, and a representative from the Worldwide Cruise Terminals Consortium, which is the operator of the new cruise terminal at Kai Tak.

Mr Yung will return to Hong Kong tomorrow.

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