

Enhancement measures of Food Truck Pilot Scheme announced

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Gregory So, today (April 20) visited Canton's Kitchen Dim Sum Expert, the 12th food truck to start business under the Food Truck Pilot Scheme, and announced the introduction of enhancement measures with a view to opening up more business opportunities for the operators.

Mr So said, "The food truck initiative was launched as a pilot scheme for two years. Its positioning is not in competition with existing food establishments. It was uncertain before implementation whether the existing operating venues and mode of operation were suitable and the process of execution would be smooth. It needs various parties to try out and consolidate experiences. The Tourism Commission has been in close contact with the operating venues and food truck operators to collect opinions for adjustments and enhancements as and when appropriate.

"In fact, tourism also includes meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions (MICE) travel and tourism activities with local characteristics. Following these two directions, we decided to enhance the pilot scheme, including fine-tuning the operating venues of food trucks and introducing a more flexible mode of operation.

"About a month ago, we started liaison with new venues to introduce the enhancement from the direction of MICE tourism. It does take some time to put in place various arrangements."

After observation of more than two months, the Tourism Commission noted that food trucks' business performance closely related to the operators' own marketing strategy, the operating locations and the flow of people. Overall, the best performing venue for food trucks is Hong Kong Disneyland, where the pitch is well situated with plentiful people flow. Wong Tai Sin Square, Tsim Sha Tsui Arts Square and Salisbury Garden have the average number of customers. The performance of Energizing Kowloon East Venue 1, Ocean Park, Golden Bauhinia Square and the Central Harbourfront Event Space are less satisfactory.

It is observed that the flows of people at some operating venues are relatively low, while some are rather unstable. The business may be better if the operators have

adopted more proactive sales and marketing efforts.

Regarding the enhancement measures, more operating opportunity and flexibility will be provided for food trucks operating at Energizing Kowloon East Venue 1 and Ocean Park by partnering with AsiaWorld-Expo (AWE). A good number of large-scale MICE events are often held at AWE. When there are suitable MICE events, one of the food trucks at each of the two venues may operate at AWE in the first week of the trading period and the other two trucks will go to AWE in the following week. If the food trucks at the two venues do not opt to operate at AWE, opportunity will be open to other food trucks on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Hong Kong Science Park is another popular venue for MICE events. The Tourism Commission will also provide another mode of operation for food trucks at Golden Bauhinia Square and the Central Harbourfront Event Space. When there are MICE events held at the Science Park, food trucks at these venues will have priority to choose to operate there. This is not a mandatory arrangement. Similarly, if no operator chooses to go to the Science Park, opportunity will be open to other food trucks.

The flow of people at Energizing Kowloon East Venue 1 is concentrated during lunch hours. In light of this, the food trucks there are given the option to try operating at different venues in different times of the day. The Tourism Commission will arrange for food trucks to operate at Energizing Kowloon East Venue 1 in the daytime and shift to operate at Tsim Sha Tsui Art Square in the evening, in order to dovetail with the maximum number of customers during the peak hours of the two venues and to increase operational flexibility.

With the support of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, a food truck pitch will be installed at the Hong Kong Science Museum in Tsim Sha Tsui. The operating infrastructure is now being arranged. One food truck will be deployed from Salisbury Garden and Tsim Sha Tsui Art Square to operate at the Science Museum when the installation works are completed in November.

Mr So said, "I have to thank all operating venues for their support for the pilot scheme. They have invested considerable resources to manage the food trucks. They spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in providing electricity facilities for food trucks, in return for daily rental of \$300 to \$700, which is relatively low compared with those kiosks in the venues."

As for the mode of operation, the Tourism Commission will provide flexibility for all food trucks. A special arrangement was announced earlier for all food trucks to participate in tourism events organised by the Hong Kong Tourism Board, such as the Dragon Boat Carnival, the Cyclothon and the Hong Kong New Year Countdown Celebrations to experience and test out their business at mega events. The Government has recently earmarked funding in the Budget to promote small to medium-size tourism activities with local characteristics and appeal to visitors. To tie in this initiative, the Food Truck Pilot Scheme will allow food trucks to apply to operate at these tourism events for a maximum of two days in each two-week trading period. The relevant events should possess local characteristics and be able to attract visitors, and relevant licences should be obtained. Generally, the event should possess a Temporary Places of Public Entertainment Licence issued by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. Food trucks should abide by the relevant terms and conditions and should not obstruct traffic.

Mr So said, "The above enhancement measures are expected to roll out successively in the end of May or early June. I have to emphasise that it takes time to see the effect of the enhancement measures. We will maintain close contact with the operators and operating venues and further adjust the Pilot Scheme if needed. We hope that the implementation of the Pilot Scheme will become better and smoother."

Please find details of relevant enhancement measures of the Food Truck Pilot Scheme in the Annex.

Ends/Thursday, April 20, 2017

Issued at HKT 20:02