

## Co-ordination measures drawn up for visitors to Hong Kong during Chinese New Year Golden Week

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The Tourism Commission, in co-operation with relevant government departments, major tourist attractions, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) and the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC), has drawn up related measures to cope with the tourist flow between Hong Kong and the Mainland during Chinese New Year Golden Week (February 15 to 21), a Government spokesman said today (February 8).

Relevant government departments will enhance manpower at all control points and co-ordinate transport and cross-boundary services during Chinese New Year Golden Week.

The Inter-departmental Joint Command Centre set up by the Immigration Department, the Police, the Customs and Excise Department (Customs) and other relevant departments will be activated during the period to monitor the situation at each land control point, as well as to maintain close liaison with the relevant Mainland counterparts and take contingency action where necessary.

In addition, the Tourism Commission will maintain effective communications with the tourism authorities in Guangdong and Shenzhen based on the mechanism for information exchange and emergency handling of Golden Weeks.

"It is expected that passenger traffic from February 15 to 21 will be heavier than usual. To avoid congestion during the morning and evening peak hours at various boundary control points, we urge Mainland visitors and local residents to cross the boundary at less busy hours," the spokesman said.

To assist visitors in planning their trips, the Immigration Department will upload the daily arrival figures at all control points to its website ([www.immd.gov.hk](http://www.immd.gov.hk)) from February 16 to 22. Such information will also be hyperlinked to the HKTB's website ([www.discoverhongkong.com](http://www.discoverhongkong.com)) for visitors' reference.

With the Tourism Commission's co-ordination, major tourist attractions will extend their opening hours as appropriate and formulate crowd control measures and contingency arrangements during Chinese New Year Golden Week. At the same time,

the Tourism Commission, in collaboration with the TIC, will appeal to travel agents and restaurants targeting Mainland tour groups to be vigilant in ensuring appropriate measures be taken in the orderly management of tourists and coaches.

As regards visitors' consumer awareness, the Tourism Commission and the HKTB have deployed staff to distribute souvenirs and leaflets printed with messages concerning consumer rights and channels for lodging complaints to Mainland visitors at the Lo Wu Control Point, the Lok Ma Chau Control Point and other popular attractions, so as to enhance their awareness of the protection of their own rights. An advisory note on consumer rights for Mainland group tour visitors has also been uploaded to the websites of the Tourism Commission and relevant local bodies, and published in the Mainland through the China National Tourism Administration.

Meanwhile, to protect group tour visitors' rights, the TIC will enforce a series of regulatory measures on arrangements for receiving inbound Mainland group tours, which includes requiring Hong Kong travel agents to register with the TIC the itineraries of the Mainland inbound tours that they receive together with proof of accommodation within a specified period. The TIC will deploy additional manpower for conducting inspections in districts where many of the registered shops are located, such as Hung Hom and To Kwa Wan, and offer immediate assistance to tourists and tourist guides during Chinese New Year Golden Week. In addition, Customs and the Police will step up inspection of retail shops targeting Mainland tourists, so as to combat acts of unfair trade practices and coerced shopping. Customs, the Police, the TIC and the Consumer Council will also handle visitors' complaints in Hong Kong through a fast-track referral system.

The Tourism Commission has provided the hotlines of the relevant local organisations to inbound tourists via the tourism authorities in Guangdong and Shenzhen. During Chinese New Year Golden Week (from February 15 to 21), in case of emergency, Mainland inbound group tourists, tour escorts and tourist guides can seek assistance directly from the TIC by calling its service hotline 2807 0707 (operating from 9am to midnight). As for enquiries or complaints concerning consumer rights, they can call the HKTB hotline 2508 1234 (operating from 9am to 6pm) or the Consumer Council hotline 2929 2222 (operating from 9am to 5.30pm).

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