

SCED's speech at Workshop on Human Resources Development for MICE and related-Tourism sectors (English only)

Following is a speech by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Frederick Ma, at the Workshop on Human Resources Development for MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions) and related-Tourism sectors (MICEMan Workshop) today (November 22):

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted to be here today to join you at this MICEMan Workshop. This is the first-ever platform which brings together trainers, employers and policy makers to exchange views on human resources issues faced by our MICE industries. The training of new talent; retraining of those who are already on the job; and ways of attracting and retaining quality talent, both local and overseas, are all important for the further development of our MICE market.

The MICE sector has contributed significantly to our economy over the years, both in terms of income and employment generated. Because of all these economic benefits, the international and regional competition in the MICE industry has become increasingly intense. To stay ahead of competition, ensuring supply of quality human resources remains a key to success. We need to build on our existing pool of local and international talent, and work hand-in-hand with the training institutes, universities and employers in the field to bridge any gaps in our labour market.

To target this, I have a few questions in mind and hope that with your contribution today, we will have a clearer picture in mapping our way forward. First, are we producing the right and enough graduates to meet market needs and to respond to keen regional competition in the MICE industry? Second, what are the major challenges faced by the MICE industry in attracting, recruiting and retaining talent? Third, how can we enlarge our pool of talent, both from the local and overseas markets?

I believe the best way to get answers to these questions is through direct face-to-face interaction. We hope today's workshop will provide a forum for us to achieve this goal.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are now living in a world that is vastly more resilient,

open and fast changing than ever before. To better serve our MICE industry, we need to ensure that our graduates can meet the requirements of the industry, and our existing MICE and tourism workforce is equipped to meet new challenges.

As mentioned by the Chief Executive in his Policy Address, it is necessary for the industry and the Government to think creatively and work together to enlarge our pool of human talent, in order to ensure adequate supply of quality talent to meet market needs. Today, we bring together not only key participants from the MICE industry, but also colleagues from the tourism, security, education and manpower policy fronts. I am sure your views would help give us inspiration as to how we may adjust our relevant policies to remove any bottlenecks for the industry to recruit the right talent, from local and overseas, for providing effective services to our MICE clients.

Lastly, I would like to thank our panel speakers today. They are Dr Karin Weber, Dr KK Lo, Mr Dane Cheng, and colleague from the Immigration Department, Ms Helen Chan. I would, of course, need to thank all of you once again for taking time to share with us your experience, wisdom and insight on human resources development for MICE and related tourism sectors. I look forward to your active participation to make the Workshop a rewarding event. No doubt the workshop would help shed light on our policy focus on MICE human resources in future.

Thank you.

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