

Consultation paper on the review of the operation and regulatory framework of the tourism sector, 2011

Reform Option

Below is a brief reply on the consultation paper on the review of the operation and regulatory framework of the tourism sector.

We won't option for any of the options listed in the paper. We focus mainly on the tourist guides and tour escorts sector.

1. Establish an independent body (whether it is a statutory or semi-government) to take up the regulatory functions of the Tourist Guides and Tour Escorts. The nature and function of the new body is the same as TIC but report directly to TC instead of TAR.
2. The new body should have a solid legal basis to carry out regulatory work such as go on coach to inspect the tourist guides.
3. The new body will carry out the accreditation and license issuance for tourist guides and tour escorts, inspect the service standard of tourist guides and tour escorts, put in place a disciplinary mechanism to handle breaches of the codes and directives, handle complaint and dispute cases from traveler or travel agents which involve tourist guides and/or tour escorts.

The new body can consider taking up the workshops on "Knowledge on Hong Kong" and "Professional Ethics" for Continue Professional Development (CPD) Scheme for tourist guide pass.

Also the body can co-ordinate with the tourism offices and associations (such as WFTGA, IATM, SEATG etc.) around the world to see how to upgrade and raise the standard of both tourist guides and tour escorts. However the new body will not provide Tourist Guide or Tour Escort Training courses to its members in order not to complete with the existing associations or institutions who provide those training. Also it will reduce the workload of the new body and the new body will concentrate on licensing, code of conduct and complaints of its members.

4. The new body works with the government, TIC and the related associations.
5. Government would be responsible for monitoring the operation of the independent statutory body and set up an independent appeal committee to handle appeals.
6. This option can also retain the two-tier regulatory regime.
7. TIC functions will remain as a trade organization with regulatory function for Inbound and Outbound travel agents. However the tourist guides and tour escorts accreditation and regulation will be split and take over by the new establish body.

Consultation paper on the review of the operation and regulatory framework of the tourism sector, 2011

8. The Chairman, vice-chairman and the members of the board of directors of the independent body should be appointed by the Government. Appointees may include trade members, non-trade members and government representatives. We suggested that TC to be the Chairman of the new body. However the length of service of TC should have long enough to understand and put things in action. We notice that TC usually changes within 2-3 years.
9. Also a separate appeal committee should be set up to handle appeals which include some Board of Directors of the new body, trade members, tourist guides, tour escorts and non-trade members.

Merits and drawbacks

1. It consists of both trade and non-trade members. Hence the new body is still close to the industry.
2. Not a travel agents' body regulate the tourist guides and tour escorts and avoid criticism on "insiders regulating insiders" and dominant by TIC.
3. If it is followed the structure of the TIC (as a trade organization) and have Ordinance to regulate, it will be a two-tier regulatory regime.

Timeframe for Implementation

1 to 2 years – set up of the new body (including office, manpower, M&A, appointment of Board members etc.), Ordinance, transition time.

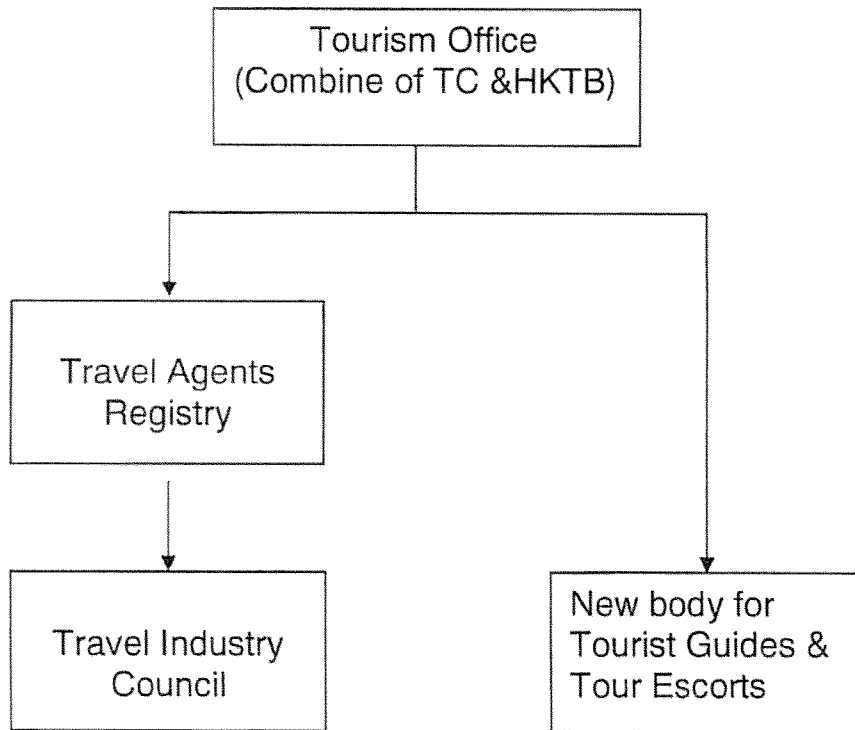
Financial Implications

1. Income - Registration fees for tourist guide passes and tour escort passes
2. Income – if the body takes up the CPD scheme, income will be generated by the workshops.
3. Government funding – set up cost and annual subsidiaries to the new body.

Besides, HKTB should be combined with TC to become a Government Tourism Office to formulate the strategies for tourism development, work with tourism office in other countries, co-ordinate with other government departments on tourism development and promotion of tourism in Hong Kong. This will reduce the overlapping of responsibility and the resources on both money and manpower.

Consultation paper on the review of the operation and regulatory framework of the tourism sector, 2011

Suggested structure



Senders:

Email
Mobile

Email
Mobile

However we don't want to disclosure our identity when publish for public reviews.

End