



kathy shum

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Please respond to
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cc

bcc

Subject Views on operation of HK tourism sector

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To Whom It May Concerns,

I am writing to express my opinion regarding the review of the operation and regulatory framework of Hong Kong's tourism sector.

Among the 4 options, options 1 and 2 is better than the others, because tourism is a very complex sector, so a lot of uncertainty exist if Hong Kong need to establish a new statutory body, or take over TIC, for example, who should be the person in-charge? Is there sufficient number of experts could be supplied? It may become bureaucratic and prolong the decision making if a new body is being established.

TIC has the experts, and they are knowledgeable, so it would be great to keep TIC's regulatory function. However, involving more non-trade members is a must, because it is very difficult to convince the public there is no conflict of interest at this stage. Experts from the academic field could be considered, because they are knowledgeable in tourism sector, and they could help providing opinions from different angles. But it is important to determine the percentage of non-trade members involvement, because it would be useless and their voices may not be valued if only a little of them is being involved in TIC.

Apart from those original options, I think the government could consider assigning legal power to TIC. Since TIC is not legally authorized to enforce their regulatory guidelines or penalize the offenders directly, like the tour guide issue. Therefore, time is wasted by asking other statutory body to enforce the penalty on the offenders, and it would be more efficient if TIC could enforce the punishment or transform their guidelines into laws so as to make sure everyone in the sector is following their policy.

Besides, the punishment is not heavy enough to threaten the travel agents and tour guides who cheat on the tourists, or do not follow the code of conducts. Moreover, the retail sectors should be monitored to repel the negative image created by the low tour fee incidents, because those shops are the one who earn profit by co-operating with tour guides or do not speak out when they see the tourists are forced to do shopping. It may be difficult for TIC to monitor this part, but TIC could consider monitoring it by co-operating with other statutory bodies.

I am looking forward to see a positive change.

Yours faithfully,
Kathy Shum