

總幹事報告

Executive Director's Report



今年四月，政府就旅遊業監管制度的改革展開公眾諮詢，並且表示年底前會公佈改革決定。這次檢討不僅會對議會今後在旅遊業的地位有莫大影響，更會對整個行業帶來極其深遠的後果。因此，無論是會員、導遊、領隊，還是旅客、公眾、傳媒，全都非常關注此事，甚至可以說，這是議會今年重中之重的頭等大事。除了這件事外，以下我還會概述議會在過去一年的主要工作。

檢討監管制度

政府在檢討旅遊業的諮詢文件中，提出了四個改革方案，其中兩個建議保留現行的雙軌監管制度及議會的自律監管權力，但要對議會加以改革，另外兩個則建議由政府或法定機構獨力監管旅遊業。

這次檢討對業界和議會影響深遠，議會因此特別成立了專責小組跟進，以期在廣泛諮詢業界後，向政府提交可行的建議。在四月至七月期間，議會舉辦了三次諮詢活動，合共有大約一百九十名會員參加。在收集各方意見後，專責小組草擬了建議書提交理事會審議。理事會反覆商議後，最終通過改革方案。議會於七月中把建議書提交政府，同時發給全體會員、公眾及傳媒。

In April this year, the Government launched a public consultation exercise on the reform of the regulatory regime of the industry, and remarked that a decision would be announced by the end of the year. Not only will this review exert a very strong influence on the future standing of the TIC in the industry, it will also bring about very far-reaching consequences for the entire industry. As such, a large number of people have paid intense attention to it, from members, tourist guides and tour escorts, to visitors, the public and the media. It may even be said that it was the number one issue of paramount importance to the TIC this year. In the following, I will summarise, apart from this issue, major undertakings of the TIC during the past year.

Review of regulatory regime

Of the four reform options set out in the Government's consultation paper on the review of the industry, two of them proposed retention of the current two-tier regulatory regime and the self-regulatory authority of the TIC, with reforms to be imposed on the TIC, and the other two suggested letting the Government or a statutory body regulate the industry single-handedly.

As the review would have far-reaching impacts on the industry and the TIC, the TIC specially set up a working group to follow it up in a bid to submit feasible recommendations to the Government after wide consultation with industry members. From April to July, the TIC had held three consultation activities, with a total of about 190 members present. After the views from various parties were collected, the working group drafted a proposal for discussion and approval by the Board. The TIC's reform proposal, adopted by the Board after repeated discussions, was submitted to the Government and released to all members, the public and the media in mid-July.

Since 1988, the TIC has been engaged in self-regulation of the travel industry and accumulated a considerable amount of experience and expertise, thus making itself hardly replaceable by other institutions. The TIC's proposal therefore was in favour of keeping the two-tier regulatory mechanism. And the Board would be restructured to turn non-trade directors into the majority and to allow independent directors to stand for the Chairman election, in order that the TIC would become more impartial and unbiased. Apart from that, rules to be laid down by the TIC would have to seek government approval,



業界十分關注政府對旅遊業監管架構的檢討。議會在聽取各方意見後擬備了一些改革建議，並於七月八日諮詢會員的意見。
Traders were very concerned about the Government's review on the regulatory system of the tourism sector. After considering the opinions of various sectors of the industry, the TIC worked out some reform recommendations and consulted members about them on 8 July.

自一九八八年起，議會就已對旅遊業實行自律監管，累積了相當豐富的經驗和知識，其他機構難以取代；議會的方案因此提議保留雙軌監管制度。為求議會更加不偏不倚，理事會將加以改組，使業外人士成為多數，而獨立理事也可參加主席選舉。此外，議會制訂的規則今後必須經政府批准，而所有違規及上訴個案都會交由兩個政府轄下的獨立委員會處理，使個案的處理更加公正。議會深信這個方案可以消除有關議會的錯誤觀感，提升監管制度的公信力，最為適切可行。

無論政府決定推行哪個方案，由籌備到實行都需要一段時間。在此期間，議會除了會積極配合外，還會繼續做好自律監管的工作，促使旅遊業健康發展，提升業者的服務水平，以迎接未來的新挑戰。

出外旅遊業

今年外遊業的表現只能說是不過不失：頭三季的印花收入與去年同期相比，只微升了百分之零點三。外遊業的業績未如理想，主要是因為天災人禍減低了香港人外遊的意欲。今年一月，埃及爆發大規模反政府示威，香港政府對埃及發出黑色外遊警示，不少埃及團因而取消。三月中，日本東北發生九級大地震及海嘯，並且觸發福島核電廠洩漏核輻射，使香港不僅對日本發出紅色外遊警示，更對其中四個縣發出黑色警示。旅行社取消了差不多九百個日本團，二萬多名旅客無法成行。這次災難重創日本旅遊業，香港人對日本旅遊至今仍未完全恢復信心，印花收入難免受到影響。由於日本災情嚴重，而日本向來是香港業者的重要夥伴，為表達對災民的關心，議會發起了募捐行

and all non-compliance and appeal cases would be handled by two independent committees under the Government, in order to enhance fairness in the handling of cases. It was the strong belief of the TIC that such a proposal would eradicate misconceptions about the TIC, raise the credibility of the regulatory regime and was most appropriate and viable.

Irrespective of the reform to be put in place by the Government, it will take some time from its preparation to implementation. During the period, the TIC will strive to facilitate the work and continue to enforce self-regulation dutifully, in order to prepare the industry for any new challenges lying ahead by making the industry grow healthily and

raising the service quality of its members.

Outbound travel

The mediocre performance of the outbound market this year, a mere 0.3% rise in levy income for the first three quarters, was, mainly, the result of a dampened interest in travel on the part of Hong Kong people caused by natural disasters and man-made misfortunes. In January this year, large-scale anti-government protests erupted in Egypt, with the result that the Hong Kong Government issued a black outbound travel alert for the country and plenty of package tours were cancelled. In mid-March, the north-eastern region of Japan was struck by a very severe earthquake measuring magnitude 9, tsunami waves and subsequent nuclear leaks from a nuclear plant in Fukushima prefecture. A red outbound travel alert was issued for Japan and a black one for four of its prefectures. About 900 package tours bound for Japan were cancelled as a result, with more than 20,000 travellers unable to set off for their destinations. The disaster has devastated Japan's tourism industry, and Hong Kong people have yet to feel totally comfortable with trips to Japan, hence the influence on the levy. In view of the gravity of the disaster and the long-term, vital partnership between Japan and Hong Kong traders, the TIC organised a fund-raising exercise and appealed to its members to show their concern for the earthquake victims by making donations, which were later sent to the Consulate-General of Japan in Hong Kong.

In recent years, travel agents had been forced to cancel quite a number of outbound tours because of unexpected incidents, and had had to bear huge losses themselves. The TIC therefore revised the directive governing cancellation of tours for reasons beyond control in June this year, under

動，並已把捐款轉交給日本駐港總領事館。

近年不少旅行團因突發事故而被迫取消，旅行社需要獨力承受龐大損失，議會因此在今年六月修訂了因迫不得已理由而取消旅行團的指引，容許旅行社向旅客收取航空公司等徵收的退票費。突發事故並非旅行社所能控制，新規定的目的，是使旅行社和旅客共同分擔取消旅行團的損失。一旦出現迫不得已取消旅行團的情況，議會將盡力與航空公司等磋商，希望對方可酌情處理，把旅行社和旅客的損失減至最低。

保障旅客方面，「旅行團意外緊急援助基金計劃」的特惠賠償總額，由今年三月中起，已由最高港幣十八萬元大幅提高至三十萬元。此外，議會收緊了對免費旅行團的管制，規定旅行社提供免費旅行團時，不可向旅客收取費用，並且要為參加者購買綜合旅遊保險。

議會致力保障旅客利益，無非是為了提升業者的服務水平，這對整個行業只會有利無害。今年八月中，一家旅行社在宣佈結業後仍然開門營業，一度引起混亂。基於公眾利益，議會公開表明，除非得到議會批准，否則該旅行社不能繼續經營；旅行代理商註冊處最終撤銷其牌照。旅行社開業和結業都要依照既定程序，否則只會令公眾對所有旅行社都失去信心。希望會員遵守規則，使旅遊業在適當監管下蓬勃發展。

入境旅遊業

今年一月至九月來港旅客約有百分之十六的增長，令人滿意。入境業雖然持續暢旺，但這一兩年卻有幾宗內地旅客被迫購物的事件使公眾大為關注。為整頓不良的經營手法，議會去年底至今年初共發出十個指引，所推行的措施包括會員及導遊的記分制、一團一導遊的規則、接待社須與導遊簽署服務協議的規定等。深圳市文體旅遊局已經規定，深圳合資格組團社必須在相關文件上加蓋「出境遊專用章」，並由指定審核人簽字作實。議會登記團隊確認書時，如發現會員與不合資格的組團社合作，可以拒絕登記，並且會通知深圳當局調查。

上述新措施成效顯著，今年一月至九月的入境旅客投訴數字大減三成。不過，內地旅客因不滿住宿安排而投訴的事件卻偶有發生，糾紛的起因是內地組團社沒有向旅客清楚解釋入住酒店的情況。為免不必要的糾紛，會員應向組團社闡明在香港的住宿安排；如未能安排酒店房間，應要求組團社切勿強行把旅行團送來香港。議會將繼續透過定期巡查及暗訪行動，以查察

which travel agents were allowed to collect from travellers the cancellation charges imposed by airlines, etc. Given that unexpected incidents were beyond the control of travel agents, the objective of the new rule was to allow the losses arising from tour cancellations to be borne by both travel agents and travellers. Whenever there are package tours cancelled for reasons beyond control, the TIC will try its best to negotiate with the airlines, etc for discretionary treatment in order to minimise the losses for agents and travellers.

As regards protection for travellers, the ceiling of the total ex gratia payments under the Package Tour Accident Contingency Fund Scheme was substantially increased from HK\$180,000 to HK\$300,000 in mid-March this year. And free package tours were made to follow stricter regulations, which banned any charges imposed on the tour participants and which required comprehensive travel insurance to be offered to them.

The TIC has committed itself to protecting the interests of travellers simply because it can raise the service standard of traders and contribute hugely to the whole industry. In mid-August this year, a travel agent continued to operate after announcing a close-down, thus creating confusion for a while. To protect the public interest, the TIC had to state in public that the agent was forbidden to continue its business unless approval from the TIC was obtained. Its travel agent's licence was revoked later by the Travel Agents Registry. Anyone who wishes to start a business as a travel agent or close it down later has to follow the procedures in place, or else the public will lose confidence in all travel agents. It is hoped that members will observe the rules in order that the industry can thrive under proper regulation.

Inbound travel

There was a 16% increase in inbound visitors from January to September this year, which was satisfactory. Despite continuing growth, the inbound industry had seen several cases, in which visitors from the mainland were forced to shop, during the past one to two years, which aroused deep concern among the public. The TIC therefore had issued 10 directives between late last year and early this year in order to crack down on malpractices. The measures put in place included the demerit systems for members and tourist guides, the requirement of "one tour, one guide", the need for receiving agents to sign service agreements with tourist guides, and others. The Shenzhen Municipal Bureau of Culture, Sport and Tourism also stipulated that authorised travel agencies in Shenzhen ought to have relevant documents stamped with their dedicated outbound travel stamps and signed by their specified personnel. If the TIC found out that its members were dealing with unauthorised



今年八月二十日，二百四十人參加「橋咀洲、破邊洲、鹽田梓」一天地質遊，欣賞西貢各種自然地貌。

A one-day geotour to Kiu Tsui Chau, Po Pin Chau and Yim Tin Tsai was organised on 20 August this year for 240 participants to admire the natural landscape of Sai Kung.

入境旅行社、導遊、登記店舖有沒有違反議會規例。

今年有兩宗導遊與內地旅客衝突的事件引起傳媒廣泛報導。無論誰是誰非，這類事件始終有損香港的形象。希望會員提醒導遊以客為先，避免與旅客爭執。為進一步提升導遊的專業水平，議會已修訂「導遊持續專業進修計劃」的要求。凡於二零一二年或以後申請導遊證者，以後每次續證都要達到持續專業進修的要求，藉以鼓勵導遊終身學習。此外，香港地質公園九月中獲接納為世界地質公園網絡的成員，預料遊客對地質公園導賞員的需求勢將大增。議會為此設立了「地質公園導賞員核證制度」，參加者修讀課程並通過考試後，可獲發「認可地質公園導賞員證」，以確保其素質。

內部事務

羅兵咸永道諮詢服務有限公司由去年十二月起，開始為議會展開為期一年半的內部審計，首兩個階段的審計已於今年三月及八月完成，範圍是管治及行政事宜、會員服務及公共關係。兩份審計報告提出了一系列建議，一些改善內部程序的建議已經或快將實行，而涉及議會架構的建議，則會留待政府公佈對旅遊業的檢討結果後才一併考慮。第三、四階段的審計範圍為監管、調查、處理查詢、登記事宜。

議會的規例日漸增多，會員有時未必能掌握所有規例的內容。有見及此，議會革新了網站的「指引」欄，新增分類瀏覽功能及備註欄，這對會員瞭解議會的各

tour operators when registering tour confirmation agreements, it would reject the registrations and inform the Shenzhen authorities to initiate investigations.

Thanks to the effectiveness of the above measures, complaints filed by inbound visitors during the first three quarters recorded a significant drop of 30%. Having said that, there were a few occasions when mainland visitors who were not happy with their accommodation and then complained to the TIC. The root cause of such incidents was that the tour operators on the mainland failed to explain clearly to their customers the kinds of accommodation they would stay

at. To prevent unnecessary disputes, members should notify their mainland counterparts in no unclear terms of the accommodation arrangements in Hong Kong; and should the hotel rooms be unavailable, they should urge the tour operators not to send any tour groups to Hong Kong without their consent. The TIC will press on with regular spot checks and undercover operations in order to detect whether inbound agents, tourist guides and registered shops have breached any of its rules.

There were two incidents of conflict between tourist guides and mainland visitors this year, which attracted extensive press coverage. This kind of incident, no matter who was in the right, will certainly damage the image of Hong Kong. It is hoped that members will remind their tourist guides to put the interests of visitors before theirs and avoid arguing with the visitors. To further raise the professional standard of tourist guides, the TIC revised the requirements under the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Scheme for Tourist Guides. Those who apply for the Tourist Guide Pass in 2012 or after will have to fulfil the CPD requirements every time they renew their Pass in order that the idea of lifelong learning can be cultivated among tourist guides. Following the acceptance of the Hong Kong National Park into the Global Geoparks Network in mid-September this year, the demand for geopark guides was expected to surge hugely. The TIC therefore set up the Geopark Guide Accreditation System, under which intending geopark guides may take a course and pass a qualifying examination to become Accredited Geopark Guides.

Internal matters

Starting from December last year, PricewaterhouseCoopers



議會經常與各地旅遊組織交流，圖為今年九月訪問議會的納米比亞旅遊局代表。

The TIC has frequent exchanges with tourism organisations from various places. Representatives of the Namibia Tourism Board visited the TIC in September this year.

項規則應大有幫助。

截至二零一一年十月十五日為止，議會共有一千六百一十家會員，其中基本會員有一千五百一十九家，普通會員有九十一家。為保持與會員的聯繫，議會會定期舉辦各類活動，一方面加深會員對議會的瞭解，一方面促進會員之間的友誼。今年舉辦的三次會員午餐聚會反應十分熱烈，特別是兩次有關旅遊保險的聚會，令會員對旅遊保險產品的認識增加不少。議會也舉辦了西貢一天本地遊、有關入境團指引及最低工資的簡介會，會員都踴躍參加。

旅遊業的監管制度將面臨重大變革，無論議會將來的角色有甚麼變動，我都希望會員不斷提高服務水平，使旅遊業的地位不斷提高。議會今年的工作得以順利完成，有賴各方的支持，我謹在此衷心感謝旅遊事務署、旅行代理商註冊處、保安局、旅遊業相關組織與議會合作無間。各位理事、委員、議會辦事處職員為議會勞心勞力，我也特此致以萬分謝意。

總幹事

董耀中 JP

二零一一年十月三十一日

Advisory Services Limited began to carry out an 18-month internal audit for the TIC. The first two phases of the audit, which covered governance and administration, and membership services and public relations, were completed in March and August this year. The two audit reports made a series of recommendations. Some of them, which concerned improvement on internal procedures, had already been or would soon be implemented, whereas some others, which concerned the structure of the TIC, would not be dealt with until the announcement of the Government review on the industry. Phases three and four of the audit will cover issues relating to monitoring, investigation, enquiries and registration.

As the number of rules laid down by the TIC is on the rise, members may sometimes be unable to master the contents of all of them. In view of this, the TIC revamped the “Directives” section of its website by adding a search-by-category function and a “Remarks” column, which should help members to have a good grasp of various rules of the TIC.

As at 15 October 2011, the TIC had a membership of 1,610, of which 1,519 were Ordinary Members and 91 were Affiliate Members. To maintain ties with members, the TIC organises various kinds of activities on a regular basis, which enhance members’ understanding of the TIC and allow members to strike up a friendship with one another. The three members’ lunch gatherings held this year saw very high attendance figures, especially the two about travel insurance, which boosted members’ knowledge of travel insurance products. Members were also very enthusiastic about the one-day outing to Sai Kung and the seminars about directives on inbound travel and the minimum wage.

The regulatory regime of the industry is about to face major reforms. No matter what changes will be made to the role played by the TIC, I do hope that members will keep up their efforts to upgrade service quality in order that the standing of the industry will continue to rise. The support of various parties during the past year enabled the TIC to carry out its many tasks. I would like to express my wholehearted thanks to the Tourism Commission, the Travel Agents Registry, the Security Bureau and relevant organisations of the industry for their close cooperation with the TIC. All directors, committee members and staff of the TIC have fully devoted themselves to the TIC and deserve my unreserved gratitude.

Joseph Tung JP
Executive Director

31 October 2011