

為團體旅客提供更佳購物保障

Group visitors enjoy better shopping protection

本刊記者 Staff reporter

內地旅客來香港旅遊，最喜歡做甚麼？答案很簡單：購物。根據香港旅遊發展局二零零四年的統計資料，內地過夜旅客在香港的消費之中，有百分之六十八用來購物。雖然由二零零三年七月起，內地推行「個人遊」計劃，旅客無須再隨團來港，但去年仍有六成半內地旅客，即八百萬人左右，是參加旅行團來港的(見「專題(一)」)。為了保障這八百萬內地和其他國家的團體旅客的購物權益，議會在二零零五年四月二十五日正式推出「登記店舖記分制」。

議會只是旅行社的監管機構，究竟怎樣去監管登記店舖？簡單來說，議會早在三年前就已經發出指引，規定由二零零二年二月起，會員旅行社在安排旅客前往店舖購物前，必須先把店舖的資料向議會登記，而那些店舖則必須向議會作出六項承諾(見下表)，其中之一是顧客如果對貨品不滿，只要在十四天內提出退貨要求，就可以得到全數退款。

What is the most favourite activity for mainland visitors when they travel to Hong Kong? The answer is very simple: shopping. According to the statistics released by the Hong Kong Tourism Board for 2004, mainland overnight visitors spent 68% of their total spending in the city on shopping. Although mainland China had introduced the Individual Visit Scheme in July 2003, under which mainlanders can visit Hong Kong on their own, last year still saw 65% of all mainland visitors, about 8 million, joined a package tour for a trip to Hong Kong (see "Special Topic (1)"). To protect the interests of those 8 million mainland group visitors as well as those from other countries when they shop in Hong Kong, the TIC launched the Demerit System for Registered Shops on 25 April 2005.

How can the TIC monitor those registered shops as it is merely a regulatory body of travel agents? Simply put, the TIC had issued a directive three years ago to require, with effect from February 2002, all of its member agents to register with the TIC the information of those shops to which they intended to take their tour groups, and to ask all those shops to make a total of six pledges to the TIC (see table), one of which was to fully refund their customers if a refund request was made within 14 days after the purchase.

登記店舖向議會所作的承諾 Pledges made to the TIC by registered shops	違反承諾所記的最高分數 Max. no. of demerits for breach of pledge
收據或發票上註明公司名稱及地址等資料 The receipt or voucher stating information about the company such as its name, address, etc	1
收據清楚可讀，並詳細列明貨品資料 The receipt being legible and clearly listing details of the sold items	1
協助提供接待旅行社資料 Helping provide information about the receiving agent	2
不會利用議會名義作宣傳用途 Not making use of the name of the TIC for promotional purposes	3
收據正面註明提供「十四天百分百退款保證」的字樣 The front of the receipt printed with "14-day, 100% refund guarantee"	5
提供十四天百分百退款 Offering a full refund within 14 days	10

為了確立登記店舖的監管模式，議會在二零零四年七月成立「購物事宜委員會」，專責處理與登記店舖有關的各種事務。委員會經過多個月的詳細研究後，建議推行一套登記店舖記分制，以確保有關店舖都遵守承諾。根據記分制，登記店舖假如違反上表的任何承諾，委員會可以按情況而決定需要記錄的分數。當分數累積至十分時，議會會即時發出警告信；分數累計達三十分以上，委員會則需要決定是否暫停或取消有關店舖的登記。假如委員會決定暫停或取消任何店舖的登記，並且決定不准會員旅行社繼續安排旅客前往有關店舖購物，那麼議會就會發出指引，規定會員旅行社不得安排旅客前往有關店舖購物。議會理事會在四月的會議上接納了委員會的建議，記分制於是正式面世。

香港素來享有購物天堂的美譽，而旅客又大都喜歡在香港購物，因此議會推行的記分制對旅遊業可以說是貢獻非淺。但基於權限，議會的記分制只能對團體旅客有幫助，至於那些自行前往購物的旅客，他們的權益就要靠消費者委員會等方面大力保護了。TIC

購物事宜委員會

職責：

1. 制訂有效及合理的機制以處理登記店舖違反承諾的事宜；
2. 審理登記店舖涉嫌違反承諾的個案及懲處有關店舖；以及
3. 處理其他購物的事宜。

召集人：羅祥國博士

業界委員：白嘉民先生、張健明先生、蔡百泰先生、李海童先生、譚光舜先生

業外委員：張瑤于女士、周陳文琬女士、朱樂生先生、洪宏道先生、謝永齡博士、楊孝華議員、旅遊事務助理專員或其代表

With a view to establishing a regulatory model for registered shops, the TIC formed a Committee on Shopping-related Practices in July 2004, tasked with all matters related to registered shops. The Committee, after several months' careful study, came up with the proposal of setting up a demerit system for those shops to ensure they honour their pledges. Under the system, a registered shop in breach of any one of the above pledges will be given a certain number of demerits by the Committee. Once it has 10 demerits, it will be issued with a warning letter; and if it has accumulated 30 demerits or more, the Committee will decide whether its registration will be suspended or revoked. In the event that the registration of a registered shop is suspended or revoked and that members are not allowed to take any visitors to it according to the ruling of the Committee, the TIC will issue a directive to all members banning them from arranging for visitors to patronise the shop. Approved by the TIC Board in April, the Demerit System was thus formally established.

Given the fact that Hong Kong has long been hailed as the shoppers' paradise and that many visitors do love to shop in this paradise, the Demerit System implemented by the TIC may well be said to be a notable contribution to Hong Kong tourism, even though it can only protect group visitors. As regards those tourists going to shop on their own, it is up to such bodies as the Consumer Council to devote themselves to protecting their interests. TIC

Committee on Shopping-related Practices

Terms of reference:

1. To set up an effective and reasonable mechanism to handle cases in which registered shops have breached their pledges;
2. To hear cases in which registered shops are suspected of breaching their pledges, and penalise those shops found to have breached their pledges; and
3. To handle other matters related to shopping.

Convenor: Dr Law Cheung Kwok

Trade Members: Mr Francis Bagaman, Mr Ken Chang, Mr Choi Pat Tai, Mr Lee Hoi Tung and Mr Tommy Tam

Non-trade Members: Ms Jasminia K Cheung, Mrs Grace Chow, Mr Antonio Chu, Mr Anthony Hung, Dr Tse Wing Ling, The Honourable Mr Howard Young and Assistant Commissioner for Tourism or his/her representative