



有些會員往往誤解議會的工作，以為議會各種規則只會妨礙他們經營；又或者分不清議會辦事處和理事會，以為辦事處的職員處處為難他們；又或者以為議會只是一個旅行社的商會，因此首要任務就是維護旅行社的利益。對於這些誤會，或許

我應稍作解釋。

首先，議會不僅是一個旅行社的商會，而且還是一個獲政府委以監管旅行社和保障消費者重任的機構。多年來議會一直身兼兩職，既要照顧旅行社，又要維護消費者。議會之所以制訂各種規則約束會員的經營手法，是因為要實行行業自律監管，而這種監管模式和醫生、律師、會計師等專業並無不同。

有一點希望會員明白，議會理事會在權衡政策的利弊時，所要首先考慮的，必然是行業的整體利益。理事會有三類理事：屬會代表、直選理事、獨立理事，三者各佔三份一，應已有足夠制衡，加上所有理事會的決議都必須投票通過，不應有偏袒某方面的情况。事實上，理事會的決策過程很多時都是委員會的委員最先發現問題，然後向委員會匯報，委員會經討論後認為應向理事會提交建議，最後才由理事會投票通過的。至於議會辦事處，本身只是執行理事會決定的行政單位而已，並沒有決策權，辦事處的職員全都奉命行事，又怎會像某些會員指稱的那樣故意為難他們？

會員要是遇上甚麼困難，應該開誠佈公與議會商談，那樣我們才可以設法協助。像近日有多家入境旅行社向議會報告，表示新近購入旅遊車，以應付不斷增加的入境旅客，但向運輸署申請客運營業證時卻遭拒絕。我們獲悉事件後已即時向當局跟進，希望能儘快解決問題。

最後，雖然目前外遊業和入境業的生意都明顯好轉，但我還要厭其煩的再說一遍：希望各位會員維持優質的服務。TIC

董耀中

Some members seem to have failed to understand the work of the Council, mistaking its regulations as impediments to their business; some are unable to distinguish between the Executive Office and the Board, blaming staff of the Executive Office for making things difficult for them; and some think that the Council is no more than a trade association of travel agents, and thus its primal objective can only be to protect their interests. Perhaps I should try to clear some of these misunderstandings here.

First of all, the Council is more than a trade association. It is also an organisation entrusted by the Government to monitor the practice of travel agents and through which to protect the interests of consumers. For years, the Council has been directing its efforts to safeguard the interests of both travel agents and consumers. The reason why it has laid down regulations to monitor the practice of members is that it has to implement a self-regulatory system within the industry, which is no different from other systems regulating such professionals as doctors, lawyers and accountants.

It is hoped that members can understand that when the Board is weighing a policy, the interests of the industry are always given the top priority. Since any decisions made by the Board, which is composed of an equal proportion of three kinds of director, namely representatives of Association Members, directly elected directors and independent directors, have to be put to the vote, it is highly unlikely that favouritism towards anyone would ever exist. In fact, deliberations on many issues by the Board are very often initiated by committee members, who report any problems they discern to their committees, which then study those problems and submit recommendations to the Board, which finally arrives at a decision by vote. As to the Executive Office, it is merely the executive branch of the Board and has no authority to make any policy. Its staff are just carrying out the Board's orders and have never tried to make things difficult for members on purpose, as claimed by some of them.

Whenever members have run into any difficulties, the best thing to do is to let the Council know so that we can help them. For example, some inbound agents recently told us that when they had applied to the Transport Department for Passenger Service Licences for their tour coaches newly bought to cope with the rising numbers of tourists, their applications were rejected. As soon as we were informed of their problem, we immediately brought it up with the authorities; and hopefully it will be solved quickly.

Finally, despite the evident upsurge in business in both the outbound and inbound markets, let me remind members one more time: keep up your good service. TIC

Joseph Tung