

# 議會定會繼續運作下去：主席斷言 TIC will continue to operate: avows Chairman

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編按：胡兆英先生是議會二零零九至二零一二年度的主席，去年十二月十一日連任，任期三年，至二零一五年為止。在胡先生的新一屆主席任內，議會將不再負責對行業實施自律監管，而旅行社、領隊、導遊的監管工作，將由政府成立的法定機構旅遊業監管局(旅監局)負責。議會面對這一巨變，胡先生有甚麼應對良方？他對入境業和出境業的一些重大問題有甚麼看法？本刊於二零一三年三月十三日訪問了胡先生，為讀者找出答案。以下是訪問的撮要。

*Editor's note: Mr Michael Wu, Chairman of the TIC from 2009 to 2012, was re-elected on 11 December last year for a second three-year term until 2015. During his new term of office, the TIC will no longer self-regulate the industry, and the Government will set up a statutory body, the Travel Industry Authority (TIA), to oversee the regulation of travel agents, tour escorts and tourist guides. The TIC faced with such a sea change, what tactics will Mr Wu use to tackle it? What are his views on some major issues of the inbound and outbound industries? The Voice interviewed Mr Wu on 13 March 2013 to find out the answers for our readers. The following is an excerpt of the interview.*

胡兆英先生認為，日後旅監局成立後，千萬不要變成「外行管內行」，因此業者的參與非常重要。

**Mr Michael Wu believes that when the TIA is set up, it is very important to have trade participation so as to prevent “regulation of professionals by lay people”.**

## 入境旅遊

在你上一個任期裡，業界有很多風風雨雨，有些接待內地入境團的旅行社和導遊，因為行為不當而再三引起廣泛關注。議會為此推出了一連串收緊監管的措施，卻引來一些旅行社和導遊示威反對。你怎樣評價議會對這些事情的處理方法？

在過去三年多，旅遊界的確發生了很多事情，尤其是內地入境團更發生了很多事故。內地的出境遊市場還處於開放不久的階段，需要時間慢慢成熟。

嚴格來說，內地旅客只是和內地組團社有合約關係，要投訴的話應向內地組團社提出。不過，假如是香港的接待社在服務質素方面出了問題，我們當然責無旁貸，必定會要求接待社處理旅客的不



▲ 議會主席胡兆英先生。  
Mr Michael Wu, Chairman of the TIC.

## Inbound travel

During your last term of office, the industry was faced with a lot of difficulties and troubles. The misconduct of some travel agents and tourist guides that provided reception services for inbound tours from the mainland caused widespread concern again and again. In response, the TIC introduced a series of measures to tighten regulation, which prompted some agents and guides to stage a protest march. How do you evaluate the actions taken by the TIC to handle these matters?

There have indeed been a lot of troubles in the past three years or so, especially for inbound tours from the mainland. The outbound market in mainland China has been opened up for a short time, and needs more time to grow into a mature market.

Strictly speaking, tourists from the mainland only have a contractual relationship with their mainland tour operators, and therefore they should file their complaints with them if they wish to. However, if Hong Kong's travel agents fail to deliver proper reception services, we're duty-bound to ask them to address the tourists' dissatisfaction. We've done a lot of work in regulation because we want to protect the reputation of Hong Kong tourism, and we rolled out some rather stringent measures two or three years ago because we needed to

滿。我們為了維護香港旅遊業的聲譽，在監管方面做了不少工夫，而為了在最短時間內挽回旅客的信心，所以才在兩三年前推出了一些較為嚴厲的措施。

**今年農曆新年假期時，再有一家旅行社因為住宿安排問題而備受批評。政府已要求議會進一步改善現行的規例，你擔不擔心會再次引起業者的強烈抗議？**

上次發出的十個指引，最大的爭議是規定一個內地團只可以有一個導遊，但其實全世界的旅行團都是這樣的。我們只是希望提升導遊的服務水平，並沒有針對他們的意思，但我們也不會因為一些抗議行動而退縮。至於今年農曆新年的事故，本來只是一家旅行社在住宿安排上出了亂子，但它在處理過程中卻把事情變得複雜起來。

**近年一到旺季時，酒店房間的需求都非常大。香港的酒店房間供應是不是追不上旅客的增長？**

酒店房間的確是供應不足，尤其是在旺季的時候。不過，酒店價格不穩定才是旅行社的最大隱憂。酒店業很多年前把房價分為三種：旺季、次旺季、淡季，而且很早就把價錢定下來了。可是，現在的做法卻變成連下個月的價錢都不知道，使旅行社很難經營海外市場的生意。現在人人都依賴內地的單一市場，我覺得有點偏離了旅遊業應有的軌道。

**最近有人認為，香港旅遊業的承载力已到了飽和狀態，無法再吸納更多旅客。你對這種意見有甚麼看法？**

以香港整體的接待能力來說，包括酒店、交通、觀光設施等，一年中可能只有旺季才是接待能力出現了飽和問題的。希望業界、相關推廣部門等多宣傳一些非旺季的時間，使旅客全年都會來香港旅遊。比如說在春節前、後不妨加大推廣力度，而酒店、航空公司等可以在淡季推出一些優惠套票，吸引旅客在淡季來港。

restore the confidence of tourists in a short time.

**During this year's Lunar New Year, yet another travel agent was severely criticised for its accommodation arrangements. The Government's already asked the TIC to further improve its existing rules. Are you concerned about arousing strong opposition from traders once again?**

The biggest controversy over the 10 directives issued last time is about the requirement for a mainland inbound tour to be received by one tourist guide only, which in fact is the common practice around the world. We only wanted to upgrade the service standard of tourist guides. While we've had no intention of singling them out, we wouldn't back down because of some protest. As for the incident during this year's Lunar New Year, it should've merely been about some glitches in accommodation arranged by a travel agent if it hadn't messed things up when trying to resolve them.

**The demand for rooms has been very strong during high season in recent years. Does the supply of hotel rooms in Hong Kong fail to catch up with the growth of tourists?**

There's indeed a shortage of hotel rooms, especially during high season. But the greatest concern for travel agents is fluctuating room rates. The hotel industry used to set different room rates for high season, shoulder season and low season many years ago, and to set the rates a long time in advance. Now we don't even know the rates for next month, which has made it very difficult for travel agents to do business in overseas markets. Everyone is now chasing a single market that is mainland China, and I believe our tourism industry has veered a little bit off its proper course.

**Some people have recently asserted that the carrying capacity of Hong Kong tourism has reached its limits, and Hong Kong can take no more tourists. What do you think about that view?**

In terms of the overall capacity of Hong Kong, including its hotels, transport, sightseeing facilities etc, it's only during the peak periods in a year that we've reached our limits. I hope the industry and the relevant promotion bodies can do more low-season promotions so that visitors will come to Hong Kong all year round. For example, the periods before and after Lunar New Year may be promoted with greater efforts, and hotels, airlines, etc may offer some concessionary packages during low season so as to attract visitors to come to Hong Kong then.

## Outbound travel

**In recent years, more and more Hong Kong people have travelled to less popular destinations, where accidents tend to happen more easily because they're newly developed as destinations. In these circumstances, do you have any advice for the outbound travellers?**

## 出境旅遊

近年越來越多香港人去一些較為冷門的地點旅遊，可是這些冷門的旅遊地點由於開發不久，往往較易發生意外。在這種情況下，你有甚麼忠告給予外遊旅客？

香港人的旅遊經驗非常豐富，一些熱門的地點都已經去過多次，所以才想去冷門的地方。不過，這些地方在行程、住宿、交通、設施等方面，都不能和發達地方相比，而一些觀光活動雖然有吸引力，但也難免會有一定危險，例如乘坐熱氣球等。意外有時難以避免，所以購買合適的旅遊保險非常重要，千萬不要抱著僥倖心態。

議會一直都鼓勵旅客購買旅遊保險，而旅行社在銷售旅行團時，往往會向旅客推銷合適的旅遊保險。可是，有些旅客曾經投訴這種做法，認為他們的選擇權受損。你有甚麼看法？

旅行社建議的旅遊保險應該都能夠涵蓋行程中的活動，萬一發生事故，旅客就會得到保障。此外，由同一家保險公司承保的話，出了事也易於統一處理，所以旅行社才會建議旅客向同一家公司投保。旅客自行購買旅遊保險的話，行程中的某些活動卻可能不受保障，因此應該注意涵蓋範圍，千萬不要以為買了旅遊保險就好，也不要只看價錢，以免發生意外時缺乏保障。

## 新監管制度

政府已決定成立旅監局處理監管工作，而議會則不會再負責自律監管，這可以說是最近二三十年來，在監管制度上最大的變化。議會日後將何去何從呢？

議會從一開始就是商會，現在也沒有改變，只是它的監管工作非常出色，所以大家才忘記了這點。現在既然政府、公眾、立法會等都認為需要成立旅監局，專門負責整個業界的監管工作，議會日後就需要把工作調整，由首要負責自律監管的工作，改為著重培訓、行業發展、緊急事故處理，以及排解旅客和旅行社的糾紛。以排解糾紛為例，旅客和旅行社的糾紛往往未必和違反規例有

Hong Kong people are very experienced travellers, and have travelled to some popular destinations many times. That's why they want to go to less visited places. However, the itinerary, accommodation, transport, facilities, etc of these destinations can hardly be compared with those of developed destinations. Some sightseeing activities are no doubt attractive, but they're also not without danger, such as hot-air balloon rides. As accidents are sometimes unavoidable, taking out suitable travel insurance is very important. Don't think that luck will always be on your side.

**The TIC has always encouraged travellers to buy travel insurance, and when selling package tours to travellers, travel agents often sell suitable travel insurance as well. Some travellers have complained about this practice, saying their right to choose is harmed. What do you think?**

The travel insurance recommended by travel agents should be able to cover the activities on the itinerary, and therefore travellers will be covered if any accidents happen. Besides, if only one insurance company is involved, coordinated efforts are more easily arranged whenever the need arises. That's why travel agents recommend the travellers to buy travel insurance from the same company. If the travellers take out travel insurance themselves, some itinerary activities may not be covered; so they should pay attention to what's in their insurance policy. They shouldn't think buying any travel insurance will do or just look at the premium if they want to be covered when there're accidents.

## New regulatory regime

**The Government has decided to set up the TIA to take charge of regulatory oversight, and the TIC will no longer be responsible for self-regulation. This may be said to be the biggest change in the regulatory system during the past two to three decades. What roles will be played by the TIC in the future?**

The TIC has been a trade association from the very beginning, and continues to be one even now. Many people have forgotten this fact because its regulatory work has been so outstanding. Now that the Government, the public and the Legislative Council have decided that there should be a TIA responsible for regulating the whole industry, the TIC will have to adjust its future work and shift its primary focus from self-regulation to training, industry development, emergency handling and resolving disputes between travellers and travel agents. Take resolving disputes as an example. Disputes between travellers and travel agents often have nothing to do with rule breaking, and both parties sometimes refuse to back off even a little bit just because of some misunderstanding. If the TIC can step in at that time, it's likely that the disputes may be resolved easily.

Besides, since the travel and tourism industry is one of Hong Kong's four pillar industries and travel agents play a critical part among various sectors of the industry, travel agents need to keep growing in order for the industry to keep growing. We therefore will ask the Government to set

關，有時只是雙方因為一點誤會而互不相讓，結果就鬧僵了；這時候假如議會可以居中調停，事情說不定很容易就解決了。

此外，旅遊業是香港的四大支柱產業之一，而旅行社在旅遊業的各個領域中舉足輕重，因此，要旅遊業持續增長，旅行社行業也必須不斷發展。基於這點，我們會要求政府出資設立一個旅行社行業發展基金，全力支持議會推動這個行業的發展。

### 議會目前的收入，超過六成來自外遊印花徵費，將來失去這項最大的收入來源後，怎麼運作下去？

議會除了是商會外，一向都做了不少公共職能，例如處理突發事件，考核導遊、領隊，為旅客處理投訴等，這些都不是一個純商會所做的工作。上述公共職能，議會日後失去印花收入的話，會要求政府每年撥款來繼續做。至於其他收入來源，議會可以憑藉自己的關係和資料庫，去開拓新的收入來源，例如舉辦講座、大型展銷會等。

### 議會目前的前景很不明朗，你擔不擔心會出現人才流失的問題？

任何公司都一定會有人離去、有人加入，我很高興告訴大家，議會現在並沒有人才流失的問題。議會的職員都有一份使命感，覺得是為行業做事，我感謝他們一直堅守崗位。議會一直會繼續運作下去，但將來不用做監管工作之後，僱用的人數一定會減少。在遣散員工方面，我會向理事會爭取除了基本補償外，還會有較妥善的安排。

### 在你新一屆主席任期裡，議會在各方面都將面對巨大轉變。你期望自己在這三年裡做到甚麼工作？

旅監局已鐵定成立，業界要適應將來由專責機構監管所帶來的轉變。旅監局的理事會將來會以獨立人士為主，我擔心會矯枉過正，所以正在爭取理事會要有一定百分比的業者，而理事會轄下的委員會也要有業者，千萬不要由所謂「自己人管自己人」變成「外行管內行」。此外，我還會盡力推動議會多做行業發展等方面的工作，為未來做好準備。✎

up and finance an industry development fund for travel agents and fully support the TIC in pushing for the development of travel agents.

### Over 60% of the TIC's income now comes from the outbound levy. How can it continue to operate when this biggest source of income is gone in the future?

Apart from a trade association, the TIC's performed quite a number of public functions such as handling emergencies, assessing tourist guides and tour escorts, and resolving complaints for travellers, which are not normally done by a pure trade association. The TIC will ask for public funding to continue to perform these public functions when its levy income is no longer available. As for other sources of income, the TIC may make use of its connections and databases to explore new sources of income, such as organising seminars and large-scale expositions.

### There's a lot of uncertainty about the TIC's future. Are you worried about a brain drain?

People come, people go — it's the same for all companies. I'm pleased to tell everyone that the TIC does not have any brain drain at present. Staff at the TIC all have a sense of vocation, and believe they're doing the industry a service. I'm grateful they've always stuck to their work. The TIC will continue to operate, but the number of its employees will be reduced when it no longer does regulatory work. When there're redundancies, I will urge the Board of Directors to offer better arrangements on top of basic compensation.

### During your new term of office as Chairman, the TIC will face a sea change in various aspects. What do you expect yourself to achieve in the coming three years?

As the TIA is destined to be set up, the industry has to adapt itself to changes resulting from institutional regulation in the future. Since the board of directors of the TIA will consist of mostly non-trade people, I'm worried that it may be overzealous in correcting wrongdoing. I'm fighting for a certain proportion of its directors coming from the industry, and committees under the board should also have traders. I don't want to see the regulatory regime change from so-called "regulation of cronies by cronies" to "regulation of professionals by lay people". Apart from that, I'll try my best to push the TIC to do more work relating to industry development, etc in order to prepare itself for the future. ✎