

業界已為競爭法做好準備

Industry is well-prepared for competition law

為了配合今年內全面實施的《競爭條例》，議會出外旅遊委員會、票務委員會、訓練委員會早已著手研究，並且陸續向理事會提出了建議。今年四月，理事會發出了第二百二十三、二百二十四號指引：所有今年六月一日後報名的外遊旅行團，如因迫不得已的理由而取消，旅行社收取的手續費再沒有指定金額，而旅行團服務費也再沒有建議金額上限(見「議會簡報」)。此外，理事會於六月決定，撤銷與票務服務收費有關的第一百一十二、一百四十、二百一十九號指引，由今年九月一日起生效。上述指引生效或撤銷後，會員仍可收取各種服務費，但不得議定有關金額，而且應把金額以書面通知顧客。

此外，議會還修訂了領隊證的一項申請條件。外遊領隊核證制度實施了十來年，申請領隊證的條件之一，一直都是修讀議會開辦的「外遊領隊證書課程」並通過議會舉行的考試。雖然這項安排可以保證領隊課程的水準，但《競爭條例》實施在即，所以理事會決定由今年九月一日起，有志成為領隊的人士，可以修讀議會開辦或經議會認可的課程，但仍要通過議會舉行的考試。詳情稍後會公佈。

南韓自五月底以來爆發中東呼吸綜合症，保安局在六月九日發出紅色外遊警示，大部份經營南韓團的旅行社於是取消了六月九日至七月十五日期間出發的南韓團。這次疫症爆發，使公眾注意到外遊警示制度原來是不包括旅遊健康風險的。值得稱許的是，保安局在聽取業界及公眾的意見後，從善如流，把外國的公共健康風險也包括在外遊警示制度之內。希望這個制度可以成為旅客與旅行社衡量各種外遊風險的最重要指標之一。■

董耀中

To prepare for the full implementation of the Competition Ordinance within this year, the TIC's Outbound, Ticketing and Training Committees started to study the matter a long time ago and have made proposals to the Board of Directors one after another. In April this year, the Board decided to issue Directive Nos. 223 and 224, under which package tours booked after 1 June this year will be subject to neither any specified handling fees if the tours are cancelled for reasons beyond control nor any recommended package tour service charges (see "Council Bulletin"). The Board also decided in June to revoke Directive Nos. 112, 140 and 219, which concern service fees on various ticketing services, with effect from 1 September this year. **When the above directives take effect or are revoked, members may still collect service fees, but they are not allowed to agree among themselves on the amounts of such fees and should inform their customers of the amounts in writing.**

Besides, the TIC has also amended one of the requirements for application for the Tour Escort Pass. For the dozen or so years while the Outbound Tour Escort Accreditation System has been in place, applicants for the Pass have always been required to take the Certificate Course for Outbound Tour Escorts and pass the examination, both held by the TIC. Although such an arrangement can ensure the quality of training courses for tour escorts, **the Board has decided, in view of the imminent implementation of the Competition Ordinance, to allow those who aspire to be tour escorts to take courses either organised or recognised by the TIC, starting from 1 September this year. After taking the courses, they still need to pass the examination organised by the TIC.** Details will be announced soon.

With the outbreak of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) in South Korea since late May, the Security Bureau issued a red Outbound Travel Alert (OTA) on 9 June, and most of the travel agents operating South Korea tours cancelled tours heading for the country between 9 June and 15 July. **The MERS outbreak has drawn the public's attention to the fact that travel health risk was not included in the original scope of the OTA System. It is worth praising that the Security Bureau decided to include public health risk in foreign countries in its OTA System after listening to the views of the trade and the public.** It is hoped that the OTA System can become one of the most important guidelines for travellers and travel agents to assess various risks associated with travel. ■

Joseph Tung