

旅行團活動須以安全為上

Safety must take priority in tour activities



由政府撥款港幣一千萬元而成立的「旅行社資訊科技發展配對基金先導計劃」(見「主題故事」，二零一六年第二期)，已於七月推出，首輪申請期也於九月初結束，共收到二十三份申請。待評審委員會十月下旬開會審批申請後，十一月應該可以公佈結果了。第二輪申請期在今年的十一至十二月，會員切勿錯過機會了。

由今年五月起，議會與駐港旅遊局代表協會合辦了一系列旅遊知識講座。至九月為止，已有九個國家或地區的駐港旅遊局代表，向多達二百五十餘名會員講解最新的旅遊資訊(見「議會簡報」)。會員踴躍參加先前的講座，十月的講座應該會同樣得到會員大力支持。

今年外遊業的市況相當反覆，原因有不止一個：除了經濟前景不明朗外，一些熱門的旅遊目的地也出現了可能令香港人卻步的情況，例如政局動盪、恐怖襲擊、傳染病擴散等。還幸今年一至八月的外遊印花費稍勝去年同期，這證明了會員力求服務優越與產品多元化的工夫沒有白費。

三年前埃及樂蜀發生熱氣球意外，多名香港團體旅客不幸喪生。香港的死因裁判庭今年召開研訊，裁定死者死於「意外」，死因裁判官還向涉事的會員及議會提出了一些建議。議會與外遊業者及律師研究過那些建議後，已回覆了裁判官。覆函中申明，評估旅行團活動的風險，完全是香港旅行社及其他相關第三方的責任，因此旅行社應自行制訂供內部使用的風險管理準則。議會將再為會員舉辦風險管理講座，以及發出通告，提醒會員注意相關事項。☞

董耀中

Set up by the Government with an injection of HK\$10 million, the Pilot Information Technology Development Matching Fund Scheme for Travel Agents (Pilot Scheme; see "Cover Story", No. 2/2016) was launched in July. **A total of 23 applications were received when the first-round application period ended in early September. After the Vetting Committee meets towards the end of October, it is expected that the results will be announced in November.** Members should not miss the chance when the Pilot Scheme is open for second-round applications in November and December this year.

Starting from May, the TIC and the Association of National Tourist Office Representatives in Hong Kong (ANTOR (HK)) have begun to hold a series of talks on travel knowledge, and up until September, as many as 250 members have attended the talks given by the tourist offices of nine countries or regions (see "Council Bulletin"). Given the huge popularity of these talks among members, the talks to be held in October should also be well received by members.

The outbound market has fluctuated quite a lot so far this year, for more than one reason: apart from the uncertain economic outlook, several popular destinations have seen situations likely to turn away visitors from Hong Kong such as political unrest, terror attacks and the spread of infectious diseases. **Fortunately, the outbound levy collected in the first eight months this year compared slightly favourably with the same period last year, proof that the time and effort devoted by members to quality service and diverse products have paid off.**

Several tour group members from Hong Kong were killed in a hot-air balloon accident in Luxor, Egypt three years ago. The Coroner's Court in Hong Kong held an inquest this year, and found that all the travellers died "by accident". The Coroner also made several recommendations to the member concerned and the TIC. **After studying the recommendations with outbound traders and its lawyer, the TIC has replied to the Coroner, emphasising that the duty to assess the risks of tour activities falls squarely on travel agents and other relevant third parties, and that travel agents should compile their own risk management guidelines for internal use. The TIC will organise risk management seminars for members again, and issue circulars to remind members to pay heed to relevant matters.** ☞

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