

旅遊業未來須重新省視

Rethink of future paths of tourism badly needed

今年十月，香港的入境業發生了一件非常不幸的事件：一名來自黑龍江的團體旅客，在一家珠寶店外被人毆打，其後不治。警方已拘捕了一名香港導遊及一名內地領隊，兩人被控謀殺。此事對香港旅遊業的聲譽打擊甚大，十一月內地團的數目下跌了三成。議會除了與深圳市文體旅遊局連番磋商外，還與中國國家旅遊局及廣東省旅遊局商議，務求類似的事情今後都不會再發生。

在十二月八日舉行的理事會會議上，黃進達先生當選為議會新一任主席，任期三年，直至二零一八年。相信新主席可以憑藉他的新思維，帶領議會安然渡過今後幾年將要應付的難關。理事會將於一月選出執事人員以及各委員會的召集人，然後二月就會委任各委員會的委員；新一年的各種工作就會正式展開了。

《競爭條例》已於十二月十四日全面實施，雖然議會早已著手處理了一些指引和安排，但可能仍有需要斟酌的地方。議會與競爭事務委員會會繼續磋商，務求促進競爭之餘，不會損害業者和消費者的利益。新修訂的「入境旅行團(登記店舖)購物退款保障計劃」(第225號指引)將於明年一月生效，其中有不少改進之處，例如日後如有登記店舖被法庭裁定違反了《商品說明條例》，購物事宜委員會可按照個案的性質及嚴重程度而決定不同處分，但現在則只能撤銷有關店舖的登記而已。

外遊業今年的表現相當不錯，頭十一個月的外遊印花金額比去年同期增加了一成，估計全年也會錄得增幅。希望會員繼續憑藉優良的服務及產品，使業務不住增長。☞

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A most unfortunate incident happened to the inbound industry in October this year: a group visitor from Heilongjiang province was beaten up outside a jewellery shop and passed away afterwards. A Hong Kong tourist guide and a mainland tour escort were arrested and charged with manslaughter. The reputation of Hong Kong tourism has been severely hurt as a result, with the number of tour groups from the mainland down by 30% in November. **Apart from repeated discussions with the Shenzhen Municipal Bureau of Culture, Sport and Tourism, the TIC also discussed measures with the China National Tourism Administration and the Guangdong Provincial Tourism Administration to ensure that similar incidents will never happen again in future.**

At the Board of Directors meeting held on 8 December, Mr Jason Wong was elected Chairman of the TIC for a term of three years until 2018. **We believe that the new Chairman, with his new ideas, will be able to lead the TIC to overcome the difficulties it has to tackle in the coming few years.** The Board will elect its office bearers and the convenors of various committees at its January meeting, and then appoint members to the committees at its February meeting, after which the business for the new year will officially begin.

Although the TIC had dealt with several of its directives and practices long before the Competition Ordinance took full effect on 14 December, there may still be some areas where further consideration is required. **Continuous discussion between the TIC and the Competition Commission will be maintained in order that competition will not be promoted at the expense of the interests of industry members and consumers.** The newly revised Refund Protection Scheme (Registered Shops) for Inbound Tour Group Shoppers (Directive No. 225) will be effective from January next year. There are several improvements to the scheme, including the flexibility given to the Committee on Shopping-related Practices to select a penalty from several possible ones for registered shops found by the courts to have violated the Trade Descriptions Ordinance according to the nature and severity of the cases, which under the existing scheme can only lead to deregistration of the shops concerned.

The performance of the outbound industry has been rather encouraging this year, with a 10% increase in the amount of the outbound levy collected up until November and an overall increase for the whole year expected. It is hoped that members will continue to grow their business through excellent services and products. ☞

Joseph Tung