

Co-ordination measures drawn up for visitors to Hong Kong during Labour Day holiday

The Tourism Commission, in co-operation with relevant government departments, major tourist attractions, the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) and the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), has drawn up measures to cope with the tourist flow between Hong Kong and the Mainland during the Labour Day holiday, a government spokesman said today (April 29).

Relevant government departments will strengthen manpower at various control points and co-ordinate transport and cross-boundary services during the Labour Day holiday.

The Inter-departmental Joint Command Centre set up by the Immigration Department, the Police, the Customs and Excise Department and other relevant departments will be activated during the Labour Day holiday to monitor the situation at each land control point, as well as to maintain close liaison with Mainland counterparts and take contingency actions where necessary.

The Tourism Commission will also maintain liaison with the tourism authorities in Guangdong and Shenzhen, and closely communicate with them on the arrival of Mainland visitors.

"It is expected that the passenger traffic from April 30 to May 5 will be heavier than usual. To avoid congestion during the morning and evening peak hours at various boundary control points, we appeal to Mainland visitors and local residents to cross the boundary during less busy hours," the spokesman said.

To assist visitors in planning their trips, the Immigration Department will upload the daily arrival figures (April 30 to May 5) of all control points to its website (www.immd.gov.hk) from May 1 to May 6. Such information will also be hyperlinked to the HKTB's website (www.discoverhongkong.com) for visitors' reference. In addition, visitors may check the estimated waiting times at all land boundary control points via the Immigration Mobile Application, which can be downloaded free of charge from the Apple App Store (supports iOS version 9.0 or above) and Google Play (supports Android version 5.0 or above).

The Tourism Commission, in collaboration with the TIC, will appeal to travel agents, shops and restaurants serving Mainland inbound tour groups to implement appropriate measures for the orderly management of tourist and coach flows. Major tourist attractions will also put in place crowd control measures during the Labour Day holiday.

As regards consumer education, the HKTB has deployed staff to distribute to Mainland visitors leaflets printed with educational messages at various

boundary control points and popular tourist destinations, so as to enhance their awareness of protecting their own rights. An advisory note on consumer rights for Mainland inbound tour group visitors has also been uploaded to the website of the Tourism Commission for Mainland visitors' reference.

To protect inbound tour group visitors' rights, the TIC will continue to enforce a series of regulatory measures on the trade's arrangements for receiving Mainland inbound tour groups, including requiring Hong Kong travel agents to register with the TIC the itineraries of the Mainland inbound tour groups that they receive together with proof of accommodation within a specified period. During the Labour Day holiday, the TIC will deploy additional manpower for conducting inspections in districts where relatively more registered shops are located and offer assistance to visitors and tourist guides. In addition, Customs and the Police will step up inspection of retail shops serving Mainland inbound tour groups so as to combat unfair trade practices such as coerced shopping.

The Tourism Commission has provided the hotlines of the relevant local organisations to Mainland inbound group visitors via the tourism authorities in Guangdong and Shenzhen. During the Labour Day holiday, in case of any emergency, Mainland inbound tour group visitors, tour escorts accompanying the tour groups and local tourist guides can seek assistance from the TIC by calling its service hotline 2807 0707 (operating from 9am to midnight). For enquiries or complaints, visitors can call the HKTB's hotline 2508 1234 (operating from 9am to 6pm) or the Consumer Council's hotline 2929 2222 (operating from 9am to 5.30pm).