

Travel Industry Authority holds first meeting

The following is issued on behalf of the Travel Industry Authority:

The Travel Industry Authority (TIA) held its first meeting today (January 14) and approved agenda items relating to its work plan, governance framework, rules of procedures, mechanism of declaration of interests and other corporate administrative matters.

The TIA is a new statutory regulatory body of the travel industry established under the Travel Industry Ordinance (Cap. 634). Its functions include promoting the integrity, competency and professionalism of travel agents, tourist guides and tour escorts through a statutory licensing and regulatory system, and regulating shops that inbound tour groups are arranged to patronise.

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, said, "The Government attaches great importance to the healthy development of the travel industry in Hong Kong. The establishment of the TIA marks a milestone in the industry's development. We will work closely with the TIA and the trade to enhance the quality of our travel industry and promote its long-term healthy development."

The Chairman of the TIA, Mr Ma Ho-fai, said, "As a new statutory regulatory body of the travel industry in Hong Kong, the TIA is entrusted with the important task of implementing the new regulatory regime under the Ordinance by taking over the industry regulatory and licensing functions from the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong and the Travel Agents Registry respectively. The TIA will work closely with different stakeholders in setting up a new robust regulatory regime for the travel industry."

At the meeting today, six committees, namely the Disciplinary Committee, the Codes and Guidelines Committee, the Licensing Committee, the Compensation Committee, the Development Committee and the Corporate Services Committee, were set up to follow up on work in different respective areas.

With a view to completing all necessary preparations in about two years for the full implementation of the new regulatory regime, the TIA will commence a series of work projects, including drafting subsidiary legislation and formulating licensing frameworks, directives, guidelines and codes of conduct.