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Total pages: 2

## **February visitor arrivals to Hong Kong record 200,000 HKTB to launch a HK\$400 million trade support plan to reinvigorate tourism**

The Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) announced that the provisional figure for visitor arrivals to Hong Kong in February was 199,000, down more than 96% from the same time last year. Prior to the major border closure measure implemented by the Government on 8 February, there were 10,000 to 20,000 arrivals per day. After 8 February, the average daily arrivals fell to 3,300, about 80% of whom were non-Mainland visitors. In view of the current development of the COVID-19 pandemic, the HKTB expects a further drop in arrivals in March.

HKTB Executive Director Dane Cheng said: “Our monthly arrivals have dropped to the level of the daily average during the peak season last year, a clear sign that the travel and related industries have been hit very hard. As such, after the epidemic abates, the HKTB will launch a plan to strengthen its support for the trade and joint promotions, with an aim to speed up the recovery of Hong Kong tourism. The initiatives will cover local and overseas travel agencies, hotels, airlines and attractions, as well as the retail, dining and Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) industries. The estimated budget for the plan will be HK\$400 million, funded by the proposed marketing budget in the 2020/21 financial year and the additional funding earmarked in the Budget.” The plan focuses on the following three areas:

### **1. Boosting domestic spending confidence and ambience**

#### Offering subsidies to the trade

- Subsidising the retail and catering sectors for joint consumer promotion
- Waiving the renewal fee for Quality Tourism Services (QTS) Scheme accredited merchants and offering a 50% reduction in the application fee for new joiners

#### Working with the trade to stimulate local spending

- Stepping up promotion and support for the QTS Scheme

### **2. Partnering with trade to intensify promotions in source markets**

#### Subsidising the trade to conduct promotions

- Waiving the participation fees of the (over 40) trade activities organised by the HKTB in visitor source markets, including trade fairs and travel missions, and providing subsidies for related air tickets and hotel accommodations
- Fully hosting travel delegations to conduct roadshows in key markets
- Inviting the travel trade in key markets on familiarisation trips to Hong Kong
- Reintroducing the matching fund for attractions for promotions and increasing the subsidising proportion
- Increasing the subsidising proportion for the “Explore Hong Kong Tours” support scheme

Collaborating with trade to enhance promotions to entice visitors

- Partnering with travel trade from Hong Kong and source markets to conduct tactical promotions

**3. Stepping up MICE promotion to attract high-yield overnight visitors**

Supporting the trade to entice more MICE events and activities:

- Subsidising MICE organisers to bid for large-scale conventions and exhibitions
- Lowering the threshold for applying the funding support for small & medium-sized meetings and incentives (M&I) activities and extending the scheme to the hotel sector
- Waiving the participation fees for MICE promotion activities organised by the HKTB in source markets, and providing subsidies for related air tickets and hotel accommodations

Attracting MICE visitors through enhanced promotions

- Teaming up with the hotel sector on a new initiative, called MeetON@HongKong, to provide MICE groups with free meeting packages or dining packages to attract MICE visitors
- Reinforcing Hong Kong's "The World's Meeting Place" brand image

In 2020/21, the proposed marketing budget, together with the additional funding announced in the Budget for the HKTB, is about HK\$1,120 million. The HKTB will closely monitor the latest market developments to ensure timely implementation of the initiatives and adjust its resource allocation if needed.

**Provisional visitor arrivals to Hong Kong in February 2020**

Market ('000)	February (year-on-year change)	January & February (year-on-year change)
Mainland	97 (-97.9%)	2633 (-73.9%)
Non-Mainland*	102 (-90.2%)	773 (-66.2%)
Short-haul	36 (-94.0%)	331 (-74.3%)
Long-haul	43 (-85.2%)	299 (-55.2%)
New markets	6 (-87.8%)	44 (-57.5%)
Total	199 (-96.4%)	3407 (-72.5%)

*Note: Owing to rounding, the total may differ from the sum of the individual figures.*

*\* Includes visitor arrivals from long-haul, short-haul and new markets, as well as the Macao SAR. (The full details of February visitor arrivals will be released on 31 March.)*

- Ends -

**Media can download the press release from the HKTB website:**

[https://partnernet.hktb.com/en/about\\_hktb/news/press\\_releases/index.html](https://partnernet.hktb.com/en/about_hktb/news/press_releases/index.html)

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