

**Thirty-seventh Meeting of
the Business Facilitation Advisory Committee**

***Agenda Item 3(a) : Report on the work of the
Wholesale and Retail Task Force***

Purpose

This paper reports on the work of the Wholesale and Retail Task Force (WRTF) since the last Business Facilitation Advisory Committee meeting held on 21 December 2017.

Work progress of WRTF

***Labelling System for Genetically Modified Food and Proposal on
Introduction of Pre-market Safety Assessment on Genetically Modified
Food***

2. At the WRTF meeting held on 19 March 2018, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) briefed Members on the voluntary genetically modified (GM) food labelling system and a proposal on the introduction of pre-market safety assessment on GM food.

3. Under the proposed pre-market safety assessment on GM food, GM food developers would be required to submit necessary supporting documentation to CFS to show that safety issues based on Codex principles and guidelines (which is the single most important international reference point for food associated standards) have been adequately addressed to provide better safety control over GM food. To facilitate the public and the trade to check the regulatory status of GM food, the CFS would draw up a list of approved GM food and upload it on its homepage. The CFS would work out further implementation details including the delineation of legal responsibilities and consult the WRTF before finalising them.

4. WRTF appreciated CFS's efforts in ensuring the safety of GM food and thanked the centre for taking into consideration the trades' views before finalising the proposal.

Hong Kong Tourism Board Work Plan for 2018-19

5. At the same meeting on 19 March 2018, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) gave an overview of Hong Kong's tourism performance in 2017, the outlook for 2018 as well as its work plan for 2018-19. The WRTF notes an overall increase in visitor arrivals from 2016 to 2017 but a drop in the per capita spending by overnight visitors due to a number of factors, including changes in the spending patterns of visitors, exchange rates and hotel room rates.

6. For 2018-19, focus would be placed on attracting more overnight visitors, enhancing marketing in source markets and promoting diversified travel experiences among tourists. Apart from riding on the existing promotional platforms to encourage greater spending, the HKTB would partner with travel agents and payment companies in offering shopping incentives and promoting new payment methods. Initiatives would also be undertaken to promote the two existing schemes i.e. Quality and Honest Hong Kong Tours and Quality Tourism Services.

7. WRTF welcomed HKTB's initiatives and efforts in promoting diversified tourism and maintaining visitor satisfaction levels which would be conducive to boosting spending and sales. Members were encouraged to partner with HKTB in striving for further improvement.

Way forward

8. Members are invited to note the work progress of WRTF. WRTF will continue to monitor the development of the above issues.

Business Facilitation Team,
Efficiency Office,
Innovation and Technology Bureau
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