

**Fortieth 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 14 March 2019.

Work progress of WRTF

Funding Schemes under the Trade and Industry Department

2. At the WRTF meeting held on 16 July 2019, the Trade and Industry Department (TID) briefed Members on the various funding schemes administered by the department, namely the SME Loan Guarantee Scheme, SME Export Marketing Fund, Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales (BUD Fund), and Trade and Industrial Organisation Support Fund.

3. It was proposed in the 2019-20 Budget to enhance the BUD Fund, namely increasing the approved commitment, extending the geographical support, and increasing the cumulative funding ceiling for each enterprise.

4. WRTF welcomed the funding schemes which assisted Hong Kong enterprises, in particular small and medium enterprises (SMEs), in obtaining finance, exploring export markets and enhancing their overall competitiveness.

Hong Kong Tourism Board Work Plan for 2019-20

5. At the same meeting, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) gave an overview of Hong Kong's tourism performance in 2018, the outlook for 2019 as well as its work plan for 2019-20. The WRTF noted an overall increase in visitor arrivals from 2017 to 2018. The per capita spending by overnight visitors in 2018 also increased due to a number of factors, such as changes in currency exchange rates and hotel room rates

6. For 2019-20, the HKTB would take active steps to enhance visitor arrivals by stepping up its marketing efforts in source markets, organising mega events, and promoting other tourism-related initiatives. The HKTB will also strive to maintain high visitor satisfaction levels and stimulate their spending to maximise the benefits from tourism to Hong Kong's economy and the community at large.

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. WRTF also considered that the Government should implement measures to facilitate the retail industry to boost sales.

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
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