

Travel agent and its salesperson convicted for engaging in bait and switch practice

A travel agent and its salesperson were fined \$10,000 and sentenced to 80 hours of Community Service Order respectively on March 1 and today (March 18) at West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts for engaging in bait and switch practice, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO). The travel agent was also ordered to pay the victim \$2,320 in compensation.

Customs earlier received information alleging that a travel agent and its salesperson were suspected of engaging in unfair trade practices in the sale of travel services.

After investigation, it was revealed that the travel agent had sold an air ticket voucher at a discounted price on a group purchase website. When the customer redeemed the voucher, the travel agent and its salesperson refused to provide an air ticket. The customer was allowed to use the voucher only after he purchased a more expensive air ticket and hotel package.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TDO and consumers to procure services at reputable shops.

Under the TDO, any trader who offers a service for purchase at a specified price but subsequently, with the intention of promoting a different service, refuses to deliver the service within a reasonable time commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the TDO to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

Members of the public are invited to attend Community Care Fund public consultation sessions

The following is issued on behalf of the Community Care Fund Secretariat:

The Community Care Fund (CCF) will hold three public consultation sessions on March 23 (Saturday), March 29 (Friday) and April 6 (Saturday)

respectively to gauge public views on the formulation of assistance programmes. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

Those who would like to attend the consultation sessions may call the CCF Secretariat at 2835 2279 during office hours (from 8.45am to 1pm and from 2pm to 6pm, Mondays to Fridays) or complete the online registration form at the CCF's website (www.communitycarefund.hk/en/form.asp) for seat reservation. Seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Details of the three public consultation sessions are as follows:

Date: March 23 (Saturday)

Time: 5pm to 6.30pm

Venue: Aldrich Bay Community Hall,
G/F, Oi Po House, Oi Tung Estate,
Shau Kei Wan, Hong Kong
(MTR Sai Wan Ho Station, Exit A)

Date: March 29 (Friday)

Time: 7pm to 8.30pm

Venue: Hall, 1/F, Tai Po Community Centre,
2 Heung Sze Wui Street, Tai Po,
New Territories
(MTR Tai Po Market Station, Exit A2)

Date: April 6 (Saturday)

Time: 5pm to 6.30pm

Venue: Hall, G/F, Tin Yiu Community Centre,
Tin Yiu Estate, Tin Shui Wai,
New Territories
(MTR Tin Shui Wai Station, Exit C)

TD co-ordinates the public transport operators to enhance services

Regarding the service of the MTR Tsuen Wan Line affected by the collision incident of MTR trains in the early hours today (March 18), the Emergency Transport Co-ordination Centre of the Transport Department (TD) has been closely monitoring the traffic situation and also co-ordinating the public transport operators (including franchised buses, tram and Star Ferry) to enhance their services. Meanwhile, the franchised buses operators have already enhanced the service of 11 cross-harbour routes to meet passenger demand.

As the Tsuen Wan Line service will still be affected today, the TD has

requested the public transport operators to enhance their services during the evening peak hours. The franchised bus operators plan to deploy about 80 additional buses to strengthen the cross-harbour services, and the Star Ferry will also enhance ferry services according to passenger demand.

The TD will continue to closely monitor the public transport services and traffic situation. It is anticipated that there will be more passengers using the Tsuen Wan Line cross-harbour section during the evening peak hours and the waiting time will be longer. Passengers are advised to allow more time for travelling.

Members of the public are advised to stay alert to the latest traffic situation via the TD's mobile application "HKeMobility" and the media.

Results of Pharmacists Registration Examinations December 2018 announced

The following is issued on behalf of the Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong:

The Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong announced today (March 18) the results of the Pharmacist Registration Examinations held in December 2018.

There were 70, 97 and 80 candidates sitting for examinations respectively in pharmacy legislation in Hong Kong, pharmacy practice and pharmacology with corresponding passing rates of 44 per cent, 14 per cent and 29 per cent.

Apart from meeting other requirements prescribed by the Board, any pharmacy graduate outside Hong Kong intending to be registered as a pharmacist in Hong Kong is required to pass the above three subjects.

The Board conducts its Registration Examinations twice a year, normally in June and December.

Key statistics on service demand of

A&E Departments and occupancy rates in public hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rate in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.