

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE & ED'S STATEMENT

Chairman's Message

The persistent COVID-19 pandemic has brought immense challenges to the tourism industry. Throughout these difficult times, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), as a tourism promotion organisation, has adjusted its strategy and programme with flexibility and agility. Now, as global tourism gradually recovers, Hong Kong is preparing to reopen its doors to the world. The biggest challenge to the industry is to respond to a changed global tourism landscape, and the need to stand out from regional competitors. I strongly believe that Hong Kong will continue to compete favourably if we capitalise on our well-established strengths and seize the limitless opportunities presented to us by new national policies.

Understanding our New Role and Seizing Opportunities

First, we must fully understand Hong Kong's position in global tourism. The Central Government's National *14th Five-Year Plan* and *Development Plan for the Tourism Sector during the 14th Five-Year Plan Period* categorically states its support for Hong Kong developing into an East-meets-West Centre for international cultural exchange and an international aviation hub. In addition, the *Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area* and the *Culture and Tourism Development Plan for Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area* support Hong Kong in developing into an international tourism hub and becoming a core demonstration zone for multi-destination tourism, while setting a direction to enhance tourism experiences through arts and culture and promoting cultural development with tourism resources.

These policies are enlightening and inspiring. Not only do they define Hong Kong's position and role in the National context, but they also lay out a roadmap for the future of our city's tourism industry, driving the integration of culture, sports, and tourism. Hong Kong will draw on its rich experiences in culture and arts, as well as sports mega events to tell the Hong Kong good

stories through tourism, and leverage Hong Kong's position as an international tourism hub and becoming a core demonstration zone for multi-destination tourism, to step up partnerships within the Greater Bay Area (GBA) and jointly build a powerful GBA tourism brand for promoting to international audiences.

Integrating Culture, Sports, and Tourism

East-meets-West arts and culture, and international mega events, are core strengths of the Hong Kong tourism industry, along with our diverse and exciting culinary and shopping experiences. With newly-commissioned world-class arts and cultural venues such as Xiqu Centre, M+ and Hong Kong Palace Museum in the West Kowloon Cultural District, and the soon to open East Kowloon Cultural Centre, along with internationally-acclaimed art events such as *Art Basel* and *Art Central*, Hong Kong has both the infrastructure and the intangible assets to become a global hub for arts and culture.

The integration of culture, sports, and tourism is set to become a major trend in worldwide tourism, in response to the growing demand for cultural tourism and immersive experiences. The HKTB has been a pioneer in presenting Hong Kong's world-class events, facilities, and authentic local culture to a worldwide audience through our continuous promotion of arts celebrations, the launch of the *Hong Kong Neighbourhoods* campaign, and the promotion of large-scale sports events in town.

Leveraging this momentum, The HKTB will continue to enrich Hong Kong's tourism assets and experiences, and enhance the city's soft power in arts and culture. At the same time, the HKTB will tell the Hong Kong good stories to travellers from around the world and positively promote understanding and the appeal of Hong Kong through tourism.



Dr Pang Yiu-kai, GBS, JP
Chairman, Hong Kong Tourism Board

Establishing a GBA Tourism Brand Together

Although the pandemic held back tourism, Hong Kong has continued with the development of new and revamped tourism products and experiences – including the brand new Water World Ocean Park Hong Kong, the Castle of Magical Dreams at Hong Kong Disneyland, and a sixth-generation Peak Tram. These attractions, in addition to the commencement of operation of the third runway and construction of SKYCITY at Hong Kong International Airport, will not only enrich Hong Kong's tourism offerings, but also enhance the overall tourism competitiveness of the GBA.

Hong Kong has the unique advantage of “leveraging the support from the motherland while connecting with the world”, and is ideally positioned to act as a gateway between the Mainland and cities worldwide. The HKTB will make use of our privileged position, in combination

with our expertise and products, to partner with GBA cities and establish a GBA tourism brand for regional and international markets, promoting multi-destination tourism and creating new itineraries and tourism products. I am confident that the tourism industry of Hong Kong can play a role in raising the overall competitiveness of tourism in the GBA.

Navigating a Path to Recovery Together

As I am writing this message, Hong Kong is setting out on the journey to fully resume international travel. The HKTB will continue to work closely with all stakeholders, including the Government, the travel industry and related trades, and draw on its solid tourism foundation and the combined benefits of our hardware, intangible assets and policies, to positively tell the Hong Kong good stories to the world, and cement our status as one of the world's leading tourism destinations.



Dane Cheng
Executive Director, Hong Kong Tourism Board

Executive Director's Statement

The theme of this year's annual report is *Navigating the Future Together*. The title reflects how, despite the continued impact of COVID-19 on the global tourism industry, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb) rose to the challenges in 2021/22, launching a raft of innovative initiatives together with the travel trade to generate a positive ambience while creating new business opportunities for tourism and related sectors. The HKTb has also successfully revived some of its iconic mega events in imaginative ways to showcase Hong Kong's vibrancy and dynamics to the world.

With travel still restricted by the pandemic, the HKTb adjusted its focus to first generate a positive ambience and encourage residents to be tourists in our own city, discovering unexpected delights and gaining a richer understanding of Hong Kong.

The HKTb extended the popular *Holiday at Home* promotions and launched Spend-to-Redeem "Free Tours" and "Staycation Delights" promotions with increased

quotas, together with a "Free Tours Lucky Draw", which encouraged and rewarded citizens for getting vaccinated. These promotions proved popular with members of the public and the travel trade alike and quotas were filled within days or even hours of the tours/ events being launched. In light of the promotions, the travel trade also created new routes and experiences as they warm up to the return of Mainland and overseas visitors.

Meanwhile, capitalising on the development of a cluster of new world-class arts venues in the West Kowloon Cultural District, the HKTb launched a "Hong Kong Neighbourhood – West Kowloon" promotion, inviting the public to explore the area's cultural highlights. The promotion also guided the public through unexplored streets and lanes to discover fascinating attractions and authentic local experiences, encouraging local to share by word of mouth to their friends and friends outside Hong Kong.

The HKTb also gradually resumed a number of signature events in physical format, premising on safeguarding public health and safety, including the "Hong Kong Wine & Dine Festival", "Hong Kong WinterFest", and the "New Year Countdown Celebrations". The revived events adopted novel approaches and elements to capture the world's attention and maintain Hong Kong's exposure in visitor source markets.

The New Year Countdown Celebrations, for instance, were held for the first time with an outdoor countdown concert at the Arts Park in the West Kowloon Cultural District, along with an enhanced version of *A Symphony of Lights* and a countdown clock on the giant M+ façade next to Victoria Harbour. The event attracted more than 100 media outlets from Hong Kong, the Mainland, and overseas, including CCTV, CNN, and BBC, reaching a worldwide audience of 2.4 billion people.

The series of mega events and promotions not only attracted the attention of the worldwide audiences but also won the HKTb recognition from global and local markets. For instance, *Holiday at Home* won four major awards, including a Bronze Award in the HKMA/Viu TV Awards for Marketing Excellence and Excellence in Agility and Crisis Management. Similarly, "Hong Kong Neighbourhood – West Kowloon" also won 14 awards, including the Grand Award in Marketing in the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Gold Awards 2022.

Mega events aside, the HKTb made use of diverse promotional channels to keep Hong Kong on the minds of international travellers. It signed a three-year Memorandum of Understanding with Asia's leading entertainment company CJ ENM to arrange for Korean dramas and variety shows to be filmed in Hong Kong when travel resumes, attracting Korean showbiz fans to the city. The HKTb also extended the "360 Hong Kong Moments" promotional series and developed a series of 360-degree and ASMR (autonomous sensory meridian response) videos featuring Hong Kong's great outdoors to immerse viewers in the territory's stunning scenery. In addition, the HKTb partnered with a selection of internationally-renowned media organisations to produce and broadcast travel documentaries and reality shows about Hong Kong. These initiatives shared one goal – to maintain Hong Kong's profile with global visitors as a vibrant and action-packed destination.

Meanwhile, the HKTb maintained close ties with the global travel trade, organising and participating in online and offline trade shows and conferences in Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas to provide support and partnership opportunities to the trade.

The HKTb continued its work in the fight against the pandemic. In 2021/22, the HKTb extended the fee waivers to eligible trade partners to participate in the "Anti-Epidemic Hygiene Measures Certification Scheme". Around 3,000 outlets and venues have been certified so far. For the cruise sector, we also stepped up publicity on cruise safety and hygiene standards to rebuild the confidence of visitors and members of the public.

Looking ahead, as the pandemic brought along a new normal, the HKTb is constantly reviewing the latest market updates and Hong Kong's tourism brand and positioning, with a series of research conducted. We will timely launch the new tourism brand to tell the Hong Kong good stories and drive the full revival of the tourism industry according to the actual pace of cross-boundary / border travel.

As we prepare for the new global tourism landscape, the HKTb will uphold Hong Kong's international profile through a broad array of promotional programmes. I would like to thank the Government, the tourism and related sectors, our trade partners, sponsors, and members of the public for their trust and support in our work, as well as our board members for their guidance and advice. I would also like to thank my colleagues in the Hong Kong Head Office and our elite teams at the 22 worldwide and representative offices for their hard work and dedication in achieving success for our events and promotions despite the challenges under the epidemic.

The door to Hong Kong's international connectivity is gradually opening up. The HKTb's work plan to revive the tourism industry is ready to launch, and we will continue to closely monitor the response of source markets to inbound control measures and the pace of flight resumption in order to roll out our initiatives for reviving the industry in a timely manner. I am convinced that Hong Kong tourism is rich in opportunity, and we have every reason to be optimistic and full of expectation as we move forward together into a bright new future for our tourism industry.