

## **Pandemics in control CE of Hong Kong Government releases Roadmap to Re-open Borders** Strong pushes for successfully holding the re-scheduled ITE Hong Kong 2021 in Jul/Aug

A major policy shift, the Chief Executive (CE) told media in a press briefing on April 12 Hong Kong will use vaccination as a basis for adjusting border control and social distancing measures! Around mid-May, people in mainland China presumably including mainlanders and foreigners living there can visit Hong Kong without quarantine. They will be subject to quota but apply to all types of travelers presumably including tourists too!

Thus, exhibitors from mainland China and foreign exhibitors with branch or agent there very likely can attend ITE Hong Kong 2021 which has been re-scheduled to **July 29 – August 1** from June! Of course, buyers too! These will greatly enhance chance of successfully holding this year ITE which Hong Kong's only travel fair! Accordingly, the first booking deadline will be extended to end of May!

According to the CE, internationally, Hong Kong now rank low-risk areas! In the past two weeks (March 30 – April 12), daily and on a 7-days moving average there are 2 locally infected cases of which 0.7 case of unknown source! Currently, 125 covid-19 patients still under treatment in hospital with 90% in stable conditions.

With pandemics easing, some exhibitions with mainly local participations have recently been held in Hong Kong.

Further, at the end of April, Hong Kong residents returning from any parts of mainland China will be exempted from compulsory quarantine requirement.

In time, vaccinated Hong Kong residents can travel to destinations with mutual travel bubble arrangement, or enjoy shorter or quarantine free travel provided unilaterally by some destinations.

On March 29, Hong Kong Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development revealed the city are talking to 16 jurisdictions including Singapore on travel arrangements for those vaccinated! On April 13, Singapore Transport Minister confirm finalizing details of revised agreement with Hong Kong, and hope to announce the plan soon.

Also, media reported Seychelles from March 25 allow most foreign tourists with recent PCR testing negative while Phuket Island of Thailand will offer vaccinated tourists quarantine free entry.

### **ITE for Tourism Recovery & Pent-up Demand**

In fact, many governments and organizations from various parts of the World are preparing for reopen cross border travel in the second half of this year!

Thus, the July-August date of ITE2021 can be convenient! On one hand, still months to go so more time for preparations but not too late to satisfy pent-up travel demand! For examples, some exhibitors can promote holidays to neighboring areas during ITE in August while others various outbound trips for the rest of the year or next. In any case, many shall explain new health and hygiene requirements and measures will be in place, and will there be extra flexibility in booking etc.

Surveys do consistently find strong pent-up travel demands in Hong Kong! For example, the latest survey by Hong Kong Travel Agents' Relief Alliance which interviewed over 2000 citizens in early April found over 90% of respondents hope to take overseas holiday.

By total outbound spending each year of over US\$25 billion, Hong Kong often rank Asia's 3rd largest market after China (mainland) and South Korea. With over 60% its 11000 buyers and trade visitors from Hong Kong, nearly 20% from Guangdong and another 10% from other parts of China, ITE also well cover Southern China especially the Greater Bay Area.

### **Subsidies & Discount**

TKS the organizer will share a possible subsidy by offering a 20% discount on space / booth rental to exhibitors subject to some conditions like not applicable to those carried forward from the last ITE in 2020 which was canceled.

For Hong Kong small and medium enterprises (SME) exhibiting in ITE2021, they can also apply to the government Export Marketing Fund (EMF) which offer a maximum of 50% subsidy on exhibiting costs including space / booth rental. Some prepayment before ITE open or full reimbursement afterwards are both possible.

### **ITE 2021 goes Hybrid**

Based on booking in May and June last year, ITE 2021 will use 3 halls, namely Halls 1A, B & C of the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre, instead of the normal 5 halls. In 2019, there were 56 exhibiting countries and regions and over 670 exhibitors of whom some 85% from outside Hong Kong.

The 4 days exhibition will open the first two days to trade and professionals only requiring registration for admission, while the last two days to the over 70000 quality public visitors of whom 85% prefer traveling in FIT / private group.

Also, ITE 2021 will go hybrid. Our online seminar held during ITE will have also an onsite part where the seminar will be broadcast live, and this can be handy for some exhibitors not possible making it this time. Exhibitors can also rent seminar room purpose built inside the exhibition halls to hold own trade seminar and the organizer will help in online promotions and registration.

ITE Hong Kong 2021, which incorporates the 35th ITE (Leisure) and the 16th ITE MICE, is organized by TKS and continues receiving the strong support from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China, with the Hong Kong Tourism Board, Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong, the Macau Government Tourism Office and various local and regional trade associations as Supporters. For details, enquiry and space / booth booking etc., please visit [www.itehk.com](http://www.itehk.com) or contact TKS via Email: [travel@tkshk.com](mailto:travel@tkshk.com) | Wechat: [ite-hongkong](https://www.wechat.com/p/ite-hongkong) | Tel: +852 31550600.