



HATA MATTERS

2nd Edition April 2021

HATA MATTERS is a regular newsletter with the objective to enhance communications with its members and serves to inform members of pertinent industry news and developments, membership activities & events such as study tours, annual conventions etc., selective destination updates and various articles of interest for the membership.



Feedbacks and contributions from members are most welcomed. Please send your views and contributions to manager@hata.org.hk

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We warmly welcome the following new members to the Association

Active member

Fly High Travel Limited

BH Hospitality Limited

Flickket Limited

Allied member

UOW College Hong Kong



Annual General Meeting - 03March 2020

The 32rd Annual General Meeting of the Hong Kong Association was held at the China Tang venue in Harbour City attended by 39 Active Members. Proceedings of the meeting (in two separate areas) fully complied with the prevailing health & hygiene protocols and in accordance with the guidelines as set out by the Company Registry

The Chairman convened meeting at 12:30 hours and welcomed members.

The Honorary Secretary, read out the formal notice and agenda of the meeting.

The Chairman's report: Ms. C Harris of Charlotte Travel Ltd. proposed the Chairman's Report, as presented, be adopted. The proposal was seconded by Mr. P L Yiu of CTS Intl' Science-Technology & Culture Exchange Co. Ltd. and was unanimously adopted.

The Honorary Treasurer's Report: Ms. I Tam of August Moon Tour & Travel Co. Ltd. proposed to have the Honorary Treasurer's Report and Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2019/2020, as tabled, Mr. A Leung of Cathay Holidays Ltd. seconded the proposal, and was unanimously adopted.

The Chairman introduced the six elected members:

- Mr. Edmund Tsang –Connexus Travel Limited (re-elected)
- Ms. Eliza Ma – Corporate Travel Management Limited (re-elected)
- Ms. Lily Agonoy – Jebsen Holidays Limited (re-elected)
- Mr. James Liang – Century Holiday International Travel Service (HK) Co. Limited (re-elected)
- Mr. Kelvin Ko–Premium Holidays Limited (newly elected)
- Ms. Charlotte Harris – Charlotte Travel Limited (newly elected)

The Honorary Secretary and Treasurer proposed that Yung Sai Kui CPA (翁世喬會計師行) be appointed as auditor for the financial year 2020/2021 as per the current fee. This proposal was seconded by Ms. L Agonoy of Jebsen Holidays Ltd. and was unanimously adopted.

There, being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the 32nd Annual General Meeting at 12:55 hours.

Introducing our new elected Executive Committee member

Ms. Charlotte Harris

Eurasian born in Hong Kong, raised in Southeast Asia, there was never a dull day in Charlotte Harris's childhood. School holidays were filled with visiting friends in the indigenous Malaysian longhouses, watching wildlife out of a jeep in the



Maasai Mara or exploring museums in London. Truly born into the travel industry, she was taken on her first hotel inspection at the age of 4 months at what is now Bali's Amandari and travelled to the African bush twice by the age of 3. The desire to travel and truly immerse herself in different cultures comes naturally to her.

Therefore, as a firm believer that travel unites the world, Charlotte left her corporate career in Risk Management in 2014 to join her family business, Charlotte Travel.

She has worked with her mother (Jackie Harris) and team to bring their business to the next level by enhancing DNA and creating a more personal luxury travel and lifestyle brand servicing high-end travellers. In addition to being one of Virtuoso's Founding Members in Asia, the Charlotte Travel team has been widely recognized for their innovative ways in engaging with a diverse group of high net-worth travellers who seek personal advice and exclusive access to exceptional travel experiences. As Managing Director of her 20-year-old family business, Charlotte has been recognized by nominations in the global luxury travel industry as Asia Pacific's Rising Star, Most Innovative, Most Engaged and Most Admired Travel Advisor whilst taking pride in personally looking after and accompanying her VIPs clients on their travels.



Beyond her work with Charlotte Travel, Charlotte has consulted with and sits on Advisory Boards of Rosewood Hotels & Resorts, Marriott International Luxury Brands (MILUX), Hyatt Hotels and Virtuoso. She is excited to see a speedy recovery in the travel industry and is looking forward to contributing to the Hong Kong Association of Travel Agents.

DIALOGUE WITH STEVE ODELL



Meet Steve Odell
*Senior Vice President & Managing Director, Asia Pacific
Oceania Cruises & Regent Seven Seas Cruises*

How are the forward businesses for Oceania Cruises and Regent Seven Seas Cruises?

The upper premium and luxury cruise market is strong right now. We know this through both anecdotal evidence from our day-to-day conversations with guests, but also through our recent record booking days for both Oceania Cruises and Regent Seven Seas Cruises. We have witnessed a significant uplift in consumer confidence, which has unsurprisingly resulted in a surge in sales for the 2022 and 2023 seasons. Many travellers are pushing their overseas travel into 2022 and 2023 cruise holidays instead.

Why book now?

There's a lot of pent-up demand for cruising while our Hong Kong guests wait for us to return to the ocean. Travellers are making up for lost time by spending more on luxury travel and upgrading to better and larger suites than they would normally. FOMO (fear of missing out) is fuelling demand, so we recommend guests get in quick for their preferred itineraries and suites, as sailings are filling up fast.

For example, Regent's 2023 World Cruise and Oceania Cruises' 180-day Around The World voyages both sold out within one day of going on sale.

What itineraries / categories are selling well / receiving most attention in the Hong Kong market?

The Mediterranean is the top booked destination by Hong Kong travellers, followed by Northern Europe and then Asia. Our Tokyo Roundtrip sailings during the cherry blossom season are very popular. In terms of suite categories, the Concierge level and above is booking well for Regent Seven Seas Cruises, and Veranda or above for Oceania Cruises.

What are your recommendations for travel agents during this climate?

We encourage agents to make the most of this time (and the pent-up demand) by calling ahead and asking for the business. Most guests are waiting to hear from their travel agents and are eager to plan ahead for 2022, and beyond. There's plenty of business out there so entice your clients to book early and take advantage of the great offers, reduced deposits – as low as 50% - and additional benefits available. Now is the time to secure a trip while availability is still there.



We also invite travel agents to reach out to us and let us know how we can support you – we are in this together. It is astounding to see the tenacity and resolve shown by Travel Partners over these difficult months and we are proud to work alongside them.

Oceania Cruises has just announced the name of a new ship – *Vista*; can you tell us more about this new ship?

Vista is the first of two new 1,200-guest Allura Class ships that are being constructed by renowned Italian shipbuilder Fincantieri S.p.A. The luxury vessel, the seventh for Oceania Cruises, will set sail in 2023, followed by a sister ship in 2025. Named to reflect the dawn of a new age in travel, *Vista* will exemplify all the hallmarks of the Oceania Cruises experience that guests have come to expect.

A marvel in the making, *Vista* will deliver The Finest Cuisine at Sea®, exceptionally personalised service with two staff members for every three guests, a warm and welcoming ambiance as a result of the ship's captivating residential furnishings, and introduce several unique firsts for the brand in the realms of dining and guest experience.

Watch out for more details to come over the next few months. The inaugural cruises will go on sale in September 2021. Visit www.oceaniacruises.com for more information.



Regent Seven Seas Cruises has launched *Seven Seas Splendor* last year (2020), can you tell us a bit more about her?

Seven Seas Splendor® is a milestone for both our cruise line and luxury travel as she is truly the definition of luxury perfected. Wherever you turn on board, you are surrounded by elegance, comfort and hospitality. She is the sister ship to *Seven Seas Explorer*®, renowned as The Most Luxurious Ship Ever Built™, which we launched in 2016.

The crown-jewel of *Seven Seas Splendor* is the Regent Suite. At 413 square metres, it is one of the biggest at sea. The unparalleled craftsmanship and meticulous detail attended to in the creation of these masterpieces is evident in everything from the unique design choices to the rare works of art, and grander features like an in-suite, master bathroom spa retreat — a first for any cruise ship. It truly is the most exclusive address at sea.

What sets us apart is that almost "Every Luxury is Included" with Regent Seven Seas Cruises. We are the only cruise line to offer free unlimited shore excursions in nearly every port. We also offer specialty dining, premium beverages, WiFi, pre-paid gratuities, pre- and post-land programmes on select voyages, 1-night pre-cruise hotel package in Concierge Suites & above, and laundry valet service for all guests aboard every cruise.

Looking ahead, 2022 and 2023 are shaping up to be milestone years for Regent. To honour our 30th anniversary in 2022, we've curated and enhanced 30 unique sailings. Expect to see commemorative gifts, anniversary parties, one-of-a-kind dining options, enhanced entertainment, and double savings for Seven Seas Society® members.

**Get In
Touch!**

Oceania Cruises & Regent Seven Seas Cruises – Hong Kong

Ms. Holly Kong (Director of Sales)

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MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTION

Wanchai through the lens of James So

In this edition we feature some of the photographic works taken in Wanchai by Mr. James So – General Manager of Zion Travel Service who has, over the years, been a great supporter of the association, attending most of the functions and events and is often referred to as

“HATA’s Honorary Photographer”!



^ A historical bone setting clinic



^ A popular outdoor “Shopping Mall”!

The Blue House ↓



Sweet sound of Music >



The "Old" and the "New" Eateries ↓



Letter from the Honorable YIU Si-wing



Representative of the Tourism Sector in the HKSAR Legislative Council

The Legislative Council's Concern about the Recent Development of Tourism

Launch Employment Support Scheme for the sectors in dire straits to support the tourism in frozen state

According to the statistics released by the Census and Statistics Department recently (March 16), the unemployment rate has risen to 7.2%, the highest in 16 years, for the period between December 2020 and February 2021; and analyzed by sector, the unemployment rate of the consumption- and tourism-related sectors, including retail, accommodation and food services, stayed elevated at 11.1% while the underemployment rate reached a record high of 7.2%. In fact, due to the violent incidents happening in the second half of 2019 and the COVID-19 pandemic from early 2020 till now, various

sectors in Hong Kong, including the tourism industry, have fallen off a cliff. After four waves of the local epidemic, tourism is still in a frozen state and can hardly find a silver lining during such a difficult time.

For this reason, the Government has launched the Employment Support Scheme that involved over \$80 billion to provide wage subsidies to eligible employers in two tranches, aiming to 'support enterprises and safeguard jobs'.

Indeed, the scheme has gently eased the financial pressure of enterprises and temporarily prevented massive waves of business closures. Nevertheless, after the end of the Employment Support Scheme in late November, many sectors, especially the tourism-related sectors (including travel agents, the hospitality industry, the aviation industry, and the cross-boundary transport industry), have still been facing operating difficulties and strongly wish to get further support.

Yet, for three months or so, the Government still has no plan to launch the third tranche of the Employment Support Scheme. Therefore, to

help the sector tide over the present difficulty and bounce back as soon as possible once the epidemic situation has gradually been under control, I urge the Government once again to launch the third tranche of the Employment Support Scheme in order to support the sectors in dire straits; or make reference to overseas examples, for instance, the Singapore Government provides different levels of wage subsidies based on how the respective sector has been impacted by the pandemic; and the Australian Government has unveiled an assistance package of 1.2 billion Australian dollars to support the tourism industry.



Suggest raising the allowance of Love Upgrading Scheme

In terms of supporting the employees, the Financial Secretary, while releasing the 2021-22 Budget, has mentioned that the fourth tranche of the Love Upgrading Scheme will be launched in the middle of this year and will last until the end of the year.

I agree with the concept of the Scheme and believe that it will help the employees who currently lose stable income and the freelancers who do not have fixed income in the society. For example, the tour guides and the tour escorts that make a living from guided tours can be provided with retraining opportunities and relatively stable allowances through the Scheme when the inbound and outbound tourism and the local tours have ground to a halt.

However, as the epidemic has remained severe, many people have not received salaries or have been laid off for a long period. And unfortunately, as no one knows when this tough situation ends, the above campaign seems to be a drop in the ocean and cannot truly help the unemployed. Since the Government has no plan to provide unemployment assistance, I hope that the maximum amount of allowance of the Love Upgrading Scheme can be adjusted upwards to \$9,000 per month for a period of 6 months, as a transitional measure to better support the unemployed and the underemployed.

Resume passenger immigration clearance services for economic recovery

As the epidemic has yet been brought under control, most of the sectors are still facing a dark time right now. For Hong Kong's externally-oriented economy, local consumptions can hardly support the recovery of the economy. According to the statistics released by the Government, the value of total retail sales in January 2021 amounted to \$32.6 billion, decreased by 13.6% compared with the same month in 2020, marking the 24th consecutive month of a downward trend.

As the decrease is mainly caused by the decline in the number of visitors, passenger immigration clearance services between Hong Kong and the Mainland should be resumed and travel bubbles should be established with overseas countries to boost the economy.

Therefore, once the epidemic has been brought under control, I hope that the Government can discuss the arrangement of the mutual recognition system for health codes with the authorities of the Mainland and Macao for early resumption of inbound and outbound travel; relaunch the Hong Kong-Singapore travel bubbles as soon as possible and explore the possibility of establishing travel bubbles with other cities with reference to the cooperation with Singapore.

Only by resuming inbound and outbound tourism can the economic problems and the unemployment issue of Hong Kong be solved, and can the economy be recovered



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Tasmania: St Columba Falls State Reserve	
	<p>30 minutes' drive from the popular East Coast township of St Helens</p> <p>Grade 2: No bushwalking experience is required for 20-30 minute, 1.2km return stroll</p> <p>With the tallest Fall of 90m, forests of tree ferns, myrtles and beech</p>
New South Wales: Pulpit Rock Walking Track, Blue Mountains	
	<p>1.5 hours' drive from Sydney CBD</p> <p>Grade 3: 2-3 hours, 7km return</p> <p>Can be walked either from Pulpit Rock or Govetts Leap, offers scenic valley views, lookouts, bird watching, and wildflowers</p>
Western Australia: Cape to Cape Track	
	<p>Join a 3-hour guided spectacular short section of the Cape to Cape Track from Smith Beach towards Canal Rocks.</p> <p>Chance to swim in pristine ocean shallows where ocean conditions are suitable</p>
Queensland: Burleigh Heads National Park	
	<p>20 mins drive from Surfers Paradise, Gold Coast to the Burleigh Heads.</p> <p>Easy walk that around 20 mins each way</p> <p>Views from the Tumgun Lookout of the southern Gold Coast and the lookout on the north side is equally picturesque.</p>

New Accommodation in Australia [\(More new accommodation in 2021\)](#)

	<p>Hilton's newest hotel in Melbourne has opened in March 2021. Hilton Melbourne Little Queen Street features 244 guest rooms including five</p>		<p>Australia's first Hotel Indigo has opened in Adelaide, South Australia. The 145-room hotel has Adelaide's highest rooftop bar, <i>Merrymaker</i>.</p>
	<p>Crystalbrook Collection's newest Cairns hotel, Flynn, has opened in November 2020. The 311-room hotel features two glass</p>		<p>The Ritz-Carlton's 100th property, The Ritz-Carlton Perth is the brand's first in Australia. The 205-room hotel polished 5-star luxury with all trimmings, overlooking the Swan River.</p>

Self-drive Holidays Around NSW

Self-drive holidays are becoming more popular amongst HK travellers and believing will be the trend for the post-COVID travel. From expansive outback adventures to dramatic coastline routes and lush green landscapes, there's no better place to traverse on wheels than Australia.

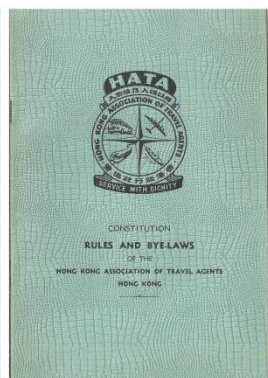
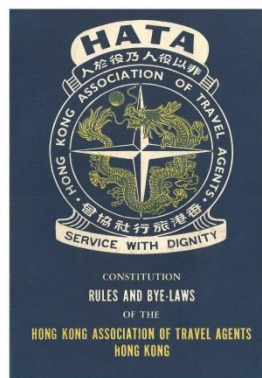
Legendary Pacific Coast Touring Route	NSW Food & Wine Trail
 <p>From world-class wine to sparkling beaches and ancient rainforest walks, the New South Wales Legendary Pacific Coast is one of the world's most epic coastal drives. Explore the famed wineries of the Hunter Valley, the vast sand dunes of Port Stephens and the sparkling beaches of Byron Bay, with memorable wildlife encounters in between.</p>	 <p>Central West NSW is the star of this delicious four-day road trip through Australia's food bowl. Feast on farm-to-table fare, visit farm gates and artisan producers, and discover an exciting mix of microbreweries, distilleries and cellar doors.</p>

HATA's HISTORY

The Hong Kong Association of Travel Agents (HATA) was established in 1957 with 23 members at the time. Being the first trade association for both Active and Allied members, it has set out a number of aims and objectives. These include:

- To represent Hong Kong at an international level
- To lobby for the improvement of quality and variety of tourism facilities in Hong Kong
- To promote its members at home and abroad
- Providing a forum for members to deal with issues that are important to them,
- Enhancing professionalism of members so as member's staff are well trained and operate to the highest possible standards
- Assisting members to develop new business opportunities.

Over the past years HATA has kept its primary objectives in mind and has increasing efforts to bring about change for the better for its members and the travel & tourism industry at large.



Today, HATA has grown from a small lobbying body to a collective body with over 300 members, consisting of agents from inbound tour, outbound tour, ticketing, cruise and other specialist & practitioners in the industry.

To all intents and purposes, HATA serves as a strategic platform, to consolidate the strength of the trade.

Over the years, HATA has been working closely with trade partners, Government bodies, suppliers, national tourist organizations such as joint promotions of "multi-destination" tourism products, and

furthermore will continue its support in strengthening co-operation and communication among various stakeholders.

There are currently seven sub-committees on various missions and projects dedicated to serving the best interest of our members

The first HATA Annual Convention was held at the Estorial Hotel in Macau with around 30 delegates and the last convention was held at the Marriott Hotel in Sydney, Australia with 119 delegates. Record attendance of 345 delegates was recorded at the annual convention held in Macau in 2007

HATA offers members approximately 3-4 study tours (both local and overseas) as well as seminars/training sessions at a nominal or subsidized cost every year to enhance product knowledge and professional skills.

HATA MATTERS issued April 2021 is published by the Secretariat and compiled by Richard Willis - Consultant to the Association. Members are encouraged to feedback with comments and suggest topics for upcoming publications. Advertisers are most welcomed : for details please contact the HATA Secretariat