

Taiwanese People in the Mainland Continue to Smoothly Return to Taiwan; the SEF Continues to Provide Necessary Service

Date: February 13, 2018

MAC Press Release No. 13

The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) solemnly issued the following four-point clarification on some recent media reports claiming that Taiwanese people in the Mainland have been unable to book return flights to Taiwan and assertions by certain individuals that Taiwanese students have had difficulty in returning to Taiwan:

1. Taiwanese people in the Mainland have smoothly returned to Taiwan, and have not had difficulty in returning home: Expanded cross-Straits flight service during the Lunar New Year holiday started on February 2 and is operating smoothly. According to information provided by the Civil Aeronautics Administration of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications (MOTC). At the start of the new year, seats were still available on flights from the eight flight points with canceled service by China Eastern Airlines and Xiamen Airlines. Taiwanese airlines have kept fares unchanged. Findings from communication between the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) and Taiwan Businessmen Association chapters in the eight flight point areas and the status of assistance requests through the SEF service hotline indicate that Taiwanese businesspeople have not faced difficulties in booking tickets home for the Lunar New Year holiday. Certain media reports may have failed to stay up to date with the actual situation.

2. Taiwanese students have already returned to Taiwan and assistance is being provided for the few exceptions: Most Taiwanese students in the Mainland make advance arrangements for cross-Straits travel during the annual winter break between semesters. Taiwanese students began returning to Taiwan in mid-to-late January. The SEF is providing assistance to the small minority of people who had not booked flights back to Taiwan by the Lunar New Year's Eve. Any persons with the names of Taiwanese students unable to book tickets are asked to provide such list to the MAC or SEF so that the matter can be pragmatically resolved.

3. The government has made preparations to ease cross-Strait transportation bottlenecks during the Lunar New Year holidays and ensure the rights and interests of the people to return home: The government of the Republic of China places great importance on the demand of the people to return home and to return safely. Related departments have prepared various supporting measures in response to the cancellation of expanded flight service by China Eastern Airlines and Xiamen Airlines during the Lunar New Year holiday to ensure that the people can successfully return to Taiwan. The MOTC and SEF also continue to explain various proposals to the public for reference. The rights and interests of the people will not be affected by any reduction in expanded flight service during the Lunar New Year holiday.

4. The SEF continues to provide service in individual cases of need for cross-Strait travel during the Lunar New Year holiday: The MAC again welcomed Taiwanese people in the Mainland, including Taiwanese businesspeople, managers and their dependents, and students, returning to Taiwan for the Lunar New Year holiday to call the SEF service hotline for any needed information or service related to cross-Strait travel (Taiwan Businesspeople Service Hotline: (02) 2533-7995; Emergency Service Hotline: (02) 2533-9995). The SEF will provide the fullest possible assistance.