

## **MAC Announces Details of Reopening up for Passenger Transits via the Mini-Three-Links**

MAC Press Release No. 011

The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) issued the following press release today (March 16, 2023) to announced the details of reopening up for passenger transits via the Mini-three-links ahead of the Tomb Sweeping Festival to facilitate travel arrangements by Taiwanese citizens. This policy was planned jointly by the MAC and relevant agencies at the directive of the Executive Yuan, who took into account COVID-19 pandemic control and the cultural tradition of remembering ancestors on the Tomb Sweeping Festival. Details of the policy are as follows:

1. Effective date: March 25, 2023.
2. Traveler eligibility: All Taiwanese citizens and their mainland Chinese spouses, including those already eligible for the "Lunar New Year Charter Ferry Program for Kinmen and Matsu," will be able to both travel and transit through the Mini-three-links. However, mainland Chinese residents holding Entry/Exit Permits under the "Regulations Governing the Trial Operation of Transportation Links Between Kinmen/Matsu/Penghu and the Mainland Area" are not eligible for passenger transits via the Mini-three-links (same as regulations before the COVID-19 pandemic).
3. Service arrangements:
  - (1) Kinmen-Xiamen route: The maximum number of daily trips is to be increased from 1 to 6.
  - (2) Kinmen-Quanzhou route: The maximum number of daily trips is to be increased from 2 to 3.
  - (3) Matsu route: The maximum number of weekly trips on the Fu'ao-Langqi and Baisha-Huangqi routes in total is to be increased from 4 to 14.

(4) Service scheduling: Taiwanese and mainland Chinese operators will schedule service on a rotational basis in the spirit of reciprocity.

(5) Demand-based additional service: To meet the transportation demand during holidays, long weekends, and special circumstances, operators may, with approval from maritime administration agencies, provide additional service of up to 1 trip beyond the aforementioned service limits.

(6) Non-scheduled service from Penghu: There is no regular cross-Strait passenger service from Penghu, but operators can submit applications to maritime administration agencies for charter service (Traveler eligibility for Kinmen and Matsu service applies to Penghu service).

The MAC explained that our government has been gradually restoring healthy and orderly cross-Strait exchanges premised on ensuring pandemic control. The "Lunar New Year Charter Ferry Program for Kinmen and Matsu" has been running smoothly since its normalized implementation, which has further consolidated the foundation for promoting the normalization of passenger service under the Mini-three-links. Between February 7 and March 9, the Mini-three-links has served 5,869 passengers to and from Kinmen and 658 passengers to and from Matsu. In light of the travel demand across the Taiwan Strait throughout the period of Tomb Sweeping holiday, our government has decided to reopen up for passenger transits via the Mini-three-links to facilitate travel arrangements by Taiwanese citizens.

The MAC stated that following comprehensive assessments with regard to factors such as pandemic prevention, the rights and interests of Taiwanese citizens, and cross-Strait exchanges, our government has successively relaxed many restrictions, including that on entry to Taiwan by residents of mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macao and on cross-Strait transportation and exchanges. On the issue of mainland Chinese residents visiting Kinmen, Matsu, or Penghu for exchange activities, given this matter's relevance with people's health and the resumption of orderly post-pandemic cross-Strait exchanges, our government

has been closely watching aspects such as the development of the COVID-19 pandemic and overall situation as we gradually resume cross-Strait people-to-people exchanges.