

Hong Kong International Airport to terminate iPermit Collection Counter service on February 28, 2013: MAC Urges Taiwanese Travelers to Use Free Online Pre-arrival Registration Service when Visiting Hong Kong

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The iPermit Collection Counter service provided at the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) for Taiwanese visitors since 2002 will be terminated on February 28, 2013. Although the iPermit online application system will continue operations as usual, dedicated counters will no longer be posted at the HKIA to provide related document issuance services to travelers.

The "iPermit" is one of the various ways for Taiwanese travelers to apply for Hong Kong entry permit. Approved applicants for entry would receive an e-notification with which they could pick up their entry permit at the iPermit Collection Counter at the HKIA. However, on September 1, 2012, the Hong Kong government loosened regulations for Taiwanese visitors to apply through a free online service for pre-arrival registration to visit Hong Kong, which resulted in significant drop of service volume handled by the Counter, prompting the decision to terminate Counter service from February 28 this year.

The iPermit application system will continue to operate after the

Counter service closes, but there will be no designated service at the HKIA to issue documents to travelers. To save Taiwanese travelers from unnecessary complications due to lack of information on the iPermit Collection Counter service termination, the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) hereby reminds the Taiwanese public that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has established a free online system through which Taiwanese travelers may apply for pre-arrival registration. Taiwanese people may make pre-arrival registrations online through internet-linked devices and immediately receive notification on entry approval into Hong Kong. Applicants may print out the "Notification of Pre-arrival Registration for Taiwan Residents" which grants entry into Hong Kong. The validity of the registration and duration of stay are the same as those of the existing "iPermit" system (registration valid for two months and two entries permitted, with a stay period up to 30 days per entry).

The MAC hereby urges the Taiwanese public to make greater use of the more convenient and cost-efficient online pre-arrival registration system for entry into Hong Kong.