# Annex C

# RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION PAPER

**Please note that all submissions received will be published and attributed to the respective respondents unless they expressly request MTI not to do so.  As such, if respondents would like (i) their whole submission or part of it, or (ii) their identity, or both, to be kept confidential, please expressly state so in the submission to MTI. In addition, MTI reserves the right not to publish any submission received where MTI considers it not in the public interest to do so, such as where the submission appears to be libellous or offensive.**

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| **Consultation topic:** | Public Consultation on Proposed Amendments to the Travel Agents Act and Regulations |
| **Name1/Organisation:**  1if responding in a personal capacity |  |
| **Contact number for any clarifications:** |  |
| **Email address for any clarifications:** |  |
| **Confidentiality** | |
| *(Please indicate any parts of your submission you would like to be kept confidential, or if you would like your identity to be kept confidential. Your contact information will not be published.)*   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  |  | **Confidential?** | |  | **Response to question 1** | Y/N | |  | **Response to question 2** | Y/N | |  | **Response to question 3** | Y/N | |  | **Responses in “other comments”** | Y/N | |  | **Identity** | Y/N | | |

**Question 1: MTI seeks comments on:**

1. The proposed amendments to facilitate a pro-business environment, including the following.
2. To encourage innovation in travel products, STB will exempt low risk players from the licensing regime and introduce a restricted licence for travel agents who sell or arrange local tours *with* passenger-carrying conveyance but without accommodation.
3. To reduce compliance cost and administrative burden, MTI/STB will a) remove the requirement to purchase fidelity insurance; b) allow the sharing of premises; c) require travel agents to inform customers of changes to tours only if payment has been received; d) introduce a provision for issuing pro-rated refunds; and e) align the timing of submission of gross annual turnover to the financial year end.
4. To deter unlicensed travel agents, MTI/STB will raise the maximum fine for contraventions by unlicensed TAs to $25,000 per contravention.

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**Question 2: MTI seeks comments on:**

1. The proposed amendments to enhance consumer protection, including the following.
2. To safeguard against errant travel agents, the show cause period for travel agents issued with a Notice of Suspension or Revocation will be reduced from 21 to 14 days. In cases of more serious contraventions, STB will have the option to require travel agents to disclose to customers that they have been issued a notice or order of suspension/revocation.
3. To safeguard against general malpractices, MTI/STB will introduce amendments including the legislation of the additional licensing condition requirement on travel insurance.

**Question 3: MTI seeks comments on:**

1. The proposed amendments to strengthen the regulatory framework, including the following.
2. To address gaps in enforcement powers, STB will be empowered to gather evidence from relevant third parties in an investigation, and take photographs, audio and video recordings that may serve as evidence. MTI also proposes to introduce administrative financial penalties (AFPs) set at a maximum of $2,000 for contraventions of minor licensing conditions.
3. To update the legislative provisions for relevance, MTI proposes to remove the Banker’s Guarantee as an option to supplement shortfall to the minimum net worth requirement. The licensing fees will also be updated to align at cost recovery basis.

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**Other comments/feedback in response to consultation paper:**

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