



HONG KONG
RETAIL MANAGEMENT
ASSOCIATION

香港零售管理協會

Press Release

5 March 2009

Retail Industry Calls for Immediate Actions on Levy Scheme Review

Ms. Caroline Mak, Chairman of the Hong Kong Retail Management Association (HKRMA), today urged the Government to set up a taskforce immediately to establish an ongoing review mechanism for the Plastic Shopping Bags Levy Scheme.

Speaking at a meeting of the Legislative Council Subcommittee on Product-Eco responsibility (Plastic Shopping Bags) Regulation, Ms. Mak emphasized that the review should not wait until a year after implementation of the regulation.

Ms. Mak said the taskforce should review the objectives of the levy scheme, define what the Government regarded as “indiscriminate use” of plastic bags, set targets for overall reduction of bags, determine the methodology for measuring plastic bag re-usage, and quantify the extent of consumers switching to using other bags after the implementation of the levy.

“In order to reduce plastic bags effectively, it is also essential for the Government to start developing a comprehensive roadmap for the levy scheme,” she said.

Discussing operational issues, Ms. Mak said the collection of levy would incur heavy administrative costs for retailers, such as IT systems upgrades. Retailers are most concerned about the extra costs associated with fees charged for payment of the levy by credit card, EPS or Octopus card. Ms. Mak said these additional fees would be a long term and substantial financial burden on retailers.

As the levy is only introduced at some retailers, HKRMA worries that the scheme will lead to public confusion and cause unnecessary disputes. It recommends that the Government reinforces the promotion of environmental protection and enhances public understanding of the levy scheme.



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Following HKRMA's introduction of "Every Day No Plastic Bag" on 3 March, another 12 retailers joined the campaign, taking the total number of participating retailers to 30. Ms. Mak said the campaign has been generally supported by the public.

HKRMA hopes that the Government would put in more resources to enhance public understanding of the importance of reducing plastic bag usage.

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About Hong Kong Management Association

The Hong Kong Retail Management Association (HKRMA) was founded in 1983 by a group of visionary retailers with a long-term mission to promote Hong Kong's retail industry and to present a unified voice on issues that affect all retailers. Established for 25 years, the Association has been playing a vital role in representing the trade, and raising the status and professionalism of retailing through awards, education and training.

Today, HKRMA is the leading retail association in Hong Kong with membership covering more than 5,000 retail outlets and employing about half of the local retail workforce. HKRMA is one of the founding members of the Federation of Asia-Pacific Retailers Associations (FAPRA) and is the only representing organization from Hong Kong. FAPRA members cover 17 Asian Pacific countries and regions.

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