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**International Business Committee**

**Facilitation measures on**

**two-way flow of high-end talents within the GBA**

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government and Mainland authorities have been exploring means to further facilitate the two-way flow of talents within the GBA, including “northbound” flow of non-Chinese Hong Kong residents.

2. The Mainland authorities rolled out the “southbound” exit endorsement for GBA talents in February 2023 valid for one to five years, which facilitates six types of talents in Mainland GBA cities to travel to Hong Kong, and holders can stay for up to 30 days per trip[[1]](#footnote-1). The six categories of talents who meet the eligibility criteria set by the Mainland authorities for the exit endorsement for talents are: a) outstanding talents; b) scientific research talents; c) education talents; d) healthcare talents; e) legal talents; and f) other talents. From February to October 2023, there were over 5 800 arrivals of holders of “southbound” exit endorsement for GBA talents in Hong Kong.

3. The measure greatly facilitates the "southbound” travel of mainland talents to Hong Kong and promotes the interaction of talents within the GBA. If the holders of the exit endorsement for GBA talents are invited by authorised host organisations under the "Pilot Scheme on Immigration Facilitation for Visitors Participating in Short-term Activities in Designated Sectors", they can participate in specified short-term activities in Hong Kong as visitors and receive remuneration, without the need to apply from the Immigration Department for employment entry permits.

4. To attract more overseas companies to set up operations in Hong Kong and facilitate foreigners working in these companies to travel to the Mainland for business purposes, reinforcing our unique role to connect the Mainland with the world, the 2023 Policy Address has announced an initiative to facilitate foreign staff of Hong Kong-registered companies to apply for “multiple‑entry visas” to the Mainland valid for up to two years. For non-Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents, they can apply for “multiple-entry visa” with a validity of up to five years.

5. Applications can be made to the Chinese Visa Application Service Center (the Center) in Wan Chai, Hong Kong, and foreign staff of companies registered in Hong Kong can enjoy streamlined and priority processing with the visa available for collection as soon as the next day. When these foreign staff visit the Center for submission of the application at the scheduled time they booked, the applicant will be issued with a special queue number for priority processing upon presentation of proof of employment in Hong Kong (e.g. staff card or business card). Prior to this measure, while foreigners working in Hong Kong can apply for multiple-entry visas to the Mainland, the validity of the visa is usually for some six months or so. This is a unique advantage the Mainland authorities have agreed to offer to these foreign talents working in companies registered in Hong Kong.

6. The introduction of the above-mentioned visa facilitation measure by the Mainland authorities positively responded to the aspirations of foreign chambers of commerce and the business community in Hong Kong for ease of northbound travel. Foreign companies and expatriate communities in Hong Kong are encouraged to make good use of this new initiative, and deepen their connections with the Mainland via Hong Kong. Coupled with the new “southbound” exit endorsement for GBA Mainland talents, this initiative will attract high-end corporations and talents around the world to settle in Hong Kong, and take root in the GBA from here, greatly enhancing the unique super connector role of Hong Kong.

7. As at 15 November 2023, there were about 2 300 “multiple-entry visas” to Mainland valid for 2 years and 5 years issued since the implementation of the measure, and about 100 foreign staff of companies registered in Hong Kong enjoyed the priority processing arrangement during the same period. So far, appointment for the visa application to the Center can be made on the next working day the earliest.

**Security Bureau**

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1. Other exit endorsements e.g. “business” and “tourist” allow a stay of seven days per trip. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)