



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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MVA BEGINS WORK ON TOUR GUIDE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – Following the enactment of PL 18-58, the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) has begun drafting regulations for the certification of tour operators and tour guides, with program implementation anticipated by early next year.

“Setting a standard for tour operators and tour guides is long overdue for our industry, and the MVA welcomes the enactment of PL 18-58,” said MVA Managing Director Perry Tenorio. “The regulation of operators and guides is necessary to ensure the quality of service and care of visitors to the Northern Marianas is at the highest level.”

Upon the publication of draft regulations in the public registry, the public will have an opportunity to comment on the proposed program. In addition to the development of regulations, the MVA will need to develop curriculum, testing, and means of enforcement, as well as provide adequate staffing for the program.

The MVA is reviewing proposed tour guide curriculum drafted several years ago in conjunction with Northern Marianas College. Tenorio said the MVA is also looking at the certification program in Guam and other jurisdictions to help develop the NMI program.

“Our Board of Directors realizes the importance of this new responsibility, especially when it comes to ensuring our visitors are safe, receiving accurate information about our islands, and receiving the full value of a memorable experience when they visit,” said Tenorio. “We will

be seeking the input of our tourism partners over the next several months as we work to develop a program that will achieve that goal.”

Under the new law, MVA now has to regulate the tour industry “through the issuance of certifications to tour operators and tourist land/sea transport operators attesting to their compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements for engaging in the tour operator and tourist land/sea transport operators business and tour guides through the issuance of certifications attesting to a minimum [proficiency] in the English language and their successful completion and training in the history, culture, and scenic attractions of the CNMI.”

The Northern Mariana Islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota are a chain of idyllic islands in the West Pacific, offering a friendly, fun and exciting vacation in paradise. They are an excellent destination for families, adventure and sports-minded travelers, as well as business people looking for a tropical haven. Adventurous travelers from Asia, Australia, Europe and elsewhere looking for new travel discoveries will find them in the Mariana Islands, just three hours travel from most cities in Japan, and four from Asia and Australia. The Northern Marianas are served from Tokyo and Osaka in Japan by Delta Air Lines and Asiana Airlines. From Korea, Asiana provides direct flights from Seoul and Busan. From China, direct flight service from Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, Tianjin, Hangzhou, and Wuhan to Saipan is available. United Airlines has daily flight connections from nine cities in Japan to Saipan with one stop. United States mainland connections can be made by Delta Air Lines to Saipan via Tokyo Narita, and United Airlines via Guam. For more information visit www.mymarianas.com.

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