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## Agency took us for ride: customers

By Lillian Kwok

**STORY:** THE sudden closure of another travel agency yesterday caught many of its customers by surprise.

Customers of Kwan's Travel Services said they had lost confidence in the travel industry.

More than 100 of them crowded outside the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong's headquarters in North Point to register for compensation.

Leslie Lee Chi-leung, who was among 500 travellers hit by the cancellation of tours, said he felt he had been deceived by the agency.

Mr Lee expressed his disappointment at the way the council had handled the case.

He said he had paid a total of \$2,400 for two people for a two-day-trip to Guangdong during the Lunar New Year holiday.

Last Sunday, just two days before departure, staff had told him that the tour had been cancelled and suggested that he and his travelling companion join a three-day tour for an extra \$500 each.

Mr Lee refused the offer and demanded a full refund. He said staff told him to return today to collect his refund.

"Where is the cheque now? How can I get my money back?" he asked.

"I am extremely angry with the agency. I feel they had intentionally delayed paying me back the money.

"I don't think the council has provided travellers with sufficient protection. It turns out that the council did very little to monitor the operation of the agencies.

"I have totally lost confidence in Hong Kong's travel industry."

Another frustrated traveller, who only gave his surname of Suen, said he had planned to go to South Korea over Christmas, but the tour appeared to have been permanently grounded.

Last November, he and 10 others had paid a total of about \$30,000 for a trip to Seoul.

Mr Suen said he had contacted the agency's staff and the council over the

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