

Over 580 cases of subsidies disbursed to fishermen under Anti-epidemic Fund

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said today (April 3) that to assist the fisheries industry to tackle the financial difficulties arising from the COVID-19 epidemic, the Government's subsidies under the Anti-epidemic Fund to eligible applicants of a total of 583 cases has been disbursed to owners of fishing vessels or fish collector vessels with Mainland deckhands, and live marine fish wholesale traders operating in the wholesale fish markets of the Fish Marketing Organization (FMO).

The department has approved 538 applications from owners of fishing vessels or fish collector vessels with Mainland deckhands, involving subsidies of \$82,520,000. For live marine fish wholesale traders operating in the wholesale fish markets of the FMO, 45 applications have been approved involving subsidies of \$9,000,000. The department will process the remaining applications as soon as possible in order to provide assistance to eligible applicants.

Owners of fishing vessels or fish collector vessels who have not yet submitted applications can download the application form from the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/what_fis/what_fis.html). Applicants should submit the completed application forms together with copies of the required documents by mail to the Fisheries Enforcement and Special Projects Division of the AFCD at 8/F of Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices, 303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon; or place them in the drop-in boxes at the lift lobby of Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices, and Aberdeen, Castle Peak, and Shau Kei Wan Wholesale Fish Markets under the FMO. The deadline for application is April 17. Vessel owners who are not in Hong Kong can authorise an agent to handle their applications.

For more details, please contact the department at 2150 7100 or 2150 7108 (owners of fishing vessels or fish collector vessels), or 2150 7103 (live marine fish wholesale traders), or view the department's website (www.afcd.gov.hk).

HKMA 2020 Pay Review

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (April 3) the results of the 2020 annual pay review. The review was undertaken by the

Governance Sub-Committee (GSC) of the Exchange Fund Advisory Committee (EFAC). The GSC's recommendations have been approved by the Financial Secretary on the advice of EFAC.

The Financial Secretary has approved that the Fixed Pay of HKMA staff will be adjusted upward by a general increase of 2.5 per cent, whereas an allocation of 0.5 per cent of Fixed Pay is set aside for awarding good performers. Variable Pay equivalent to 20.13 per cent of Total Pay will also be paid to staff on the basis of their performance in 2019. Variable Pay is a one-off payment to staff who have attained or exceeded the required level of performance.

The Financial Secretary determines the pay adjustment of HKMA staff each year in the light of recommendations made to him by the GSC through EFAC, taking into account the GSC's assessment of the performance of the HKMA in the preceding year, the pay-survey findings of the financial sector conducted by independent human resources consultants and any other relevant factors.

Although the GSC's recommendations on pay adjustment apply to staff at all levels, the Chief Executive of the HKMA, together with the Deputy Chief Executives and the Senior Executive Directors, have requested that their Fixed Pay be frozen at the 2019 level, which was endorsed by the Financial Secretary.

[Appeal for information on missing man in Tin Sum \(with photo\)](#)

Police today (April 3) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Tin Sum.

Chan Kwok-wai, aged 37, went missing after he left his residence in Hin Keng Estate on March 22 afternoon. His family made a report to Police yesterday (April 2).

He is about 1.7 metres tall, 75 kilograms in weight and of fat build. He has a round face with yellow complexion and short black hair. He was last seen wearing a black cap, a black face mask, a black short-sleeved shirt, black trousers, white shoes and carrying a black backpack.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of New Territories South on 3661 1173 or 6099 3830 or email to rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.



Grave sweepers urged to prevent hill fires

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (April 3) reminded people paying respects to their ancestors at graveyards in the countryside during the Ching Ming Festival period to exercise caution and prevent hill fires.

An AFCD spokesman said it is an offence under the Forests and Countryside Ordinance (Cap. 96) to burn offerings improperly or leave behind kindling in the countryside. Any person who contravenes the ordinance is liable to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and one year's imprisonment.

The AFCD will deploy staff and enforcement officers to patrol graveyards in the countryside during the Ching Ming Festival period. Those found breaching the law will be prosecuted.

The majority of hill fires in the territory are caused by human negligence. Accidents can be prevented if grave sweepers observe some simple guidelines:

- * Remove weeds around the graves with tools and never burn weeds;
- * Burning should only be done inside a container or iron bucket;
- * Never leave burning incense unattended; and
- * Make sure all kindling is put out before leaving.

The spokesman said that metal containers for burning offerings properly will be handed out to grave sweepers at suitable locations in the country parks during the Ching Ming Festival. The AFCD will also deploy additional country park wardens to step up patrol at hill fire black spots.

Members of the public are reminded to keep the countryside clean. Before leaving, grave sweepers should not leave behind their offerings or rubbish.

The AFCD issued fixed penalty notices to 94 persons for littering in the country parks last year.

With the view of preventing the spread of COVID-19, the spokesman also appealed to the public to avoid grave sweeping during the peak period on the day of the Ching Ming Festival. Members of the public are urged to go grave-sweeping long after the festival to avoid overcrowding, which could increase the spread of the virus. The public must comply with the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap.599G) during the specified period.

Meanwhile, the spokesman reminded grave sweepers to maintain appropriate social distance with other people, avoid meal gatherings at worship sites or in crowded places as well as maintain good personal and environmental hygiene so as to lower the risk of disease transmission, adding that the country park barbecue sites and campsites have been closed until April 11 in light of the latest developments of COVID-19 epidemic.

Flags at half staff

The Central People's Government will be mourning those who died from the infection of COVID-19 tomorrow (April 4). The National Flag and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Regional Flag which will be displayed at HKSAR Government offices tomorrow will be flown at half staff as a token of mourning.

The Chief Executive, together with the President of the Legislative Council, Executive Council Members and principal officials, will observe three minute of silence at the Chief Executive's Office at 10am tomorrow.