

Marine Department announcement

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following message as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

As No.3 Strong Wind Signal has been issued, the Marine Department reminds vessel owners, masters and persons-in-charge of vessels that they should take precautionary measures immediately and properly secure their vessels at safe locations.

In case of an accident, a report should be made immediately to the Vessel Traffic Centre at 2233 7801.

Make reasonable arrangements with employees on resuming work after typhoons or rainstorms

The Labour Department (LD) today (July 31) reminded employers to make practical and reasonable work arrangements for staff after typhoons and rainstorms. Employers should also make flexible arrangements for staff to resume work after a typhoon or rainstorm warning is cancelled, with due consideration to road, traffic and other conditions. This will help maintain good labour-management relations and ensure the safety of employees and the smooth operation of establishments.

"For staff who have practical difficulties in resuming work on time upon the cancellation of a typhoon or rainstorm warning, employers should give due consideration to the situations of individual employees and handle each case flexibly," an LD spokesman said.

"As typhoons and rainstorms are natural occurrences that cannot be avoided, for employees who are not able to report for duty or resume work on time due to adverse weather conditions, employers should not withhold their wages, good attendance bonus or allowances without reasons. Employers should enquire into the reasons and give due consideration to the exceptional circumstances in each case and should not penalise or dismiss the employee concerned rashly," he said.

The spokesman also reminded employers to observe the statutory liabilities and requirements under the Employment Ordinance, the Occupational

Safety and Health Ordinance, the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance, the Employees' Compensation Ordinance and the Minimum Wage Ordinance.

Employers should not deduct annual leave, statutory holidays or rest days employees are entitled to under the Employment Ordinance to compensate for the loss of working hours resulting from employees' failure to report for duty when Typhoon Signal No. 8, the Black Rainstorm Warning or "extreme conditions" are in force. An employer who without reasonable excuse fails to comply with the relevant provisions under the Employment Ordinance is liable to prosecution.

Employers should also note that they have an obligation to provide and maintain a safe working environment for their employees under the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance.

The LD has revised the "Code of Practice in Times of Typhoons and Rainstorms", which provides a reference for employers and employees on the work and resumption of work arrangements in the event of the Government issuing the new post-super typhoon announcement on "extreme conditions", as well as the major principles, the framework, the reference guidelines and information on relevant legislation for reference in drawing up the work arrangements under adverse weather conditions. The booklet can be obtained from branch offices of the Labour Relations Division or downloaded from the department's webpage (www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/wcp/Rainstorm.pdf).

Announcement by Judiciary on gale warning (2)

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

As the Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 has been cancelled, the Judiciary has announced that all hearings of the courts/tribunals will be resumed/held as scheduled tomorrow (August 1).

Those who were due to attend court hearings today (July 31) but were affected by the issuing of Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8, including the jurors, should do so at 9.30am tomorrow .

Court/tribunal registries and offices will also open as usual tomorrow.

Tropical Cyclone Wipha situation report (2)

The No. 8 Northeast Gale or Storm Signal issued at 1.40pm today (July 31) by the Hong Kong Observatory remains in force.

The Home Affairs Department has so far opened 25 temporary shelters in various districts and 205 people have sought refuge at the shelters.

As at 8pm, the 1823 Government Call Centre has received 10 reports of fallen trees. The Drainage Services Department has received one confirmed flooding case. The Civil Engineering and Development Department has received one report of landslide.

According to the Hospital Authority, as at 8pm, a total of 16 people, including six men and 10 women, have sought medical treatment at public hospitals during the typhoon period.

Tram, Peak Tram and ferry services were suspended. On air traffic, the Airport Authority Hong Kong reported that a total of 562 flights have been delayed and 25 flights have been cancelled today.

CS visits Emergency Monitoring and Support Centre (with photo)

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, visited the Emergency Monitoring and Support Centre (EMSC) of the Security Bureau at around 5pm today (July 31) to understand the measures and works undertaken by various departments in response to Tropical Cyclone Wipha.

Mr Cheung directed all officers on duty to remain vigilant in discharging their duties and closely monitor the city's situation. They should take all possible and immediate actions to handle emergencies, so as to protect the lives and property of Hong Kong people.

He also expressed his appreciation to civil servant colleagues and staff members in other organisations for their dedication and hard work during inclement weather to ensure that Hong Kong continues to be safe and orderly.

The EMSC will be activated when no. 8 gale or storm signal is hoisted to

co-ordinate the resources and emergency response operations across various departments.

