

Lifesaving services at Cafeteria Old Beach resume

Attention TV/radio announcers:

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

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department has announced that the lifesaving services at Cafeteria Old Beach in Tuen Mun District resumed today (May 29). The lifesaving services at the beach were suspended earlier due to an insufficient number of lifeguards on duty.

Auction of traditional vehicle registration marks to be held on June 15

The Transport Department today (May 29) announced that the auction of traditional vehicle registration marks will be held on June 15 (Saturday), in Meeting Room S421, L4, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wan Chai.

"A total of 340 vehicle registration marks will be put up for public auction. The list of marks has been posted at the department's website, www.td.gov.hk," a department spokesman said.

Applicants who have paid a deposit of \$1,000 to reserve a mark for auction should also participate in the bidding (including the first bid at the reserve price of \$1,000). Otherwise, the mark may be sold to another bidder at the reserve price.

People who wish to participate in the bidding at the auction should take note of the following important points:

- (a) Successful bidders are required to produce the following documents for completion of registration and payment procedures immediately after the successful bidding:
 - (i) the identity document of the successful bidder;
 - (ii) the identity document of the purchaser if it is different from the successful bidder;
 - (iii) a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation if the purchaser is a body

corporate; and

(iv) a crossed cheque made payable to "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" or "The Government of the HKSAR". (For an auctioned mark paid for by cheque, the first three working days after the date of auction will be required for cheque clearance confirmation before processing of the application for mark assignment can be completed.) Successful bidders can also pay through the Easy Pay System (EPS). Payment by post-dated cheques, cash or other methods will not be accepted.

(b) Purchasers must make payment of the purchase price through EPS or by crossed cheque and complete the Memorandum of Sale of Registration Mark immediately after the bidding. Subsequent alteration of the particulars in the memorandum will not be permitted.

(c) A vehicle registration mark can only be assigned to a motor vehicle which is registered in the name of the purchaser. The Certificate of Incorporation must be produced immediately by the purchaser if a vehicle registration mark purchased is to be registered under the name of a body corporate.

(d) Special registration marks are non-transferable. Where the ownership of a motor vehicle with a special registration mark is transferred, the allocation of the special registration mark shall be cancelled.

(e) The purchaser shall, within 12 months after the date of auction, apply to the Commissioner for Transport for the registration mark to be assigned to a motor vehicle registered in the name of the purchaser. If the purchaser fails to assign the registration mark within 12 months, allocation of the mark will be cancelled and arranged for re-allocation in accordance with the statutory provision without prior notice to the purchaser.

For other auction details, please refer to the Guidance Notes – Auction of Vehicle Registration Marks, which can be downloaded from the department's website, www.td.gov.hk.

LCQ11: Work of Urban Renewal Authority

Following is a question by the Hon Wu Chi-wai, and a written reply by the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, in the Legislative Council today (May 29):

Question:

The Urban Renewal Authority (URA) commenced in May 2017 a district planning study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok to explore effective modes of urban renewal for old districts with limited redevelopment potential (i.e. currently having a high development density or not much residual developable plot ratio). On the other hand, the residential units under the Starter Homes

Pilot Project for Hong Kong Residents offered for sale by the URA early this year received very good response. Regarding the work of the URA, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows the following details about each of the redevelopment projects expected to be completed by the URA in the coming five years: (i) the address, (ii) the total floor area, (iii) the number of units (and among such units, the number of those with an area of 400 square feet or above), and (iv) the expected completion date;

(2) whether it will request the URA to allocate some of the units under the redevelopment projects mentioned in (1) for the purpose of subsidised sale housing; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether it knows the latest progress of and expected completion date for the aforesaid study; whether the URA will conduct similar studies for the various old districts in Kowloon East (e.g. San Po Kong and Ngau Tau Kok), and expedite the urban renewal work for such districts, so as to tie in with the development plans under the Energizing Kowloon East initiative; if the URA will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

To explore sustainable ways of addressing the problem of urban decay, the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) commenced in May 2017 the district study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok (Yau Mong District Study). The Yau Mong District Study aims to explore ways of enhancing the efficiency of existing land use and the redevelopment potential in the two districts. The findings would also serve as the basis for the URA to identify more effective and efficient ways for urban renewal as well as practical and feasible ideas and modus operandi for adoption in the work strategy of urban renewal in future. The efficacy of various initiatives under the 2011 Urban Renewal Strategy would also be examined in the context of the study.

Having consulted the URA, my reply to the three parts of the question is as follows:

(1) Details about each of the redevelopment projects expected to be completed by the URA in the coming five years (2019-2023) (including the location of the project, total floor area, number of units to be provided, date of completion, and number of units with an area of 400 square feet or above) are listed at Annex.

(2) Of the projects listed in Annex, apart from the redevelopment project in Ma Tau Wai Road named "eResidence" which will be the Starter Homes Pilot Project for Hong Kong Residents, other projects will not be converted to subsidised sales flats. In fact, development agreements for development of these projects as private housing have been signed with joint venture developers.

As a statutory body with the function of promoting urban renewal, the URA has all along maintained an appropriate division of labour with the Hong Kong Housing Authority/Hong Kong Housing Society in terms of their roles and ambits, with the latter two being responsible for providing public housing. That said, the URA has also contributed to the provision of subsidised sales flats under its Kai Tak "flat-for-flat" project and "eResidence", the Ma Tau Wai Road Redevelopment Project. The Government has also invited the URA to identify one or two clusters of sites formerly developed under the Civil Servants' Co-operative Building Society Scheme for redevelopment under the URA's programme, and consider earmarking some of the redevelopment area for public housing development. As to whether the URA will continue to provide public housing in future, both the Government and the URA have to carefully consider the impact of this fundamental change on the supply of private housing (including the impact on replenishing the number of private housing affected by redevelopments) and the URA's self-financing mode of operation.

(3) The URA is taking forward the Yau Mong District Study progressively. The URA has earlier completed the assessment on the scale of urban decay, development density, transport and infrastructure capacity, and environmental issues of the study area, and will identify opportunities and constraints based on the study findings to address the key issues and problem areas. In addition, a selection framework for identification of "Potential Urban Renewal Opportunity Areas" will be developed. Selected opportunity areas will be consolidated into options of "Master Renewal Concept Plans" (MRCP) in subsequent stages. After the MRCP options have been formulated, public engagement will be carried out to solicit views on the options. The URA has also been reviewing the existing institutional framework and implementation mechanisms, and will incorporate the proposed implementation strategies into the MRCP options for testing. The Yau Mong District Study is expected to be completed in end-2019 or early 2020.

As mentioned above, the findings of the Yau Mong District Study will serve as the basis for the URA to identify more effective and efficient ways for urban renewal as well as practical and feasible ideas and modus operandi for adoption in other districts, including various old districts in Kowloon East.

Meanwhile, the URA has been carrying out urban renewal efforts in various old districts in Kowloon East. Through its various building rehabilitation schemes, the URA has provided assistance services to the owners of over 80 buildings in the area for improving building conditions and living environment. The URA will also continue to follow the Urban Renewal Strategy and take into account a host of factors such as building conditions, living environment, land resources available in the district for relocating affected residents, planning gains that the redevelopment project can bring about to the entire community, as well as the financial and manpower resources of the URA, in reviewing and working out the scopes and priorities of projects requiring redevelopment and rehabilitation in various districts.

Retailer convicted of supplying unsafe laser pointers

A retailer was convicted and fined \$5,000 today (May 29) at Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts for supplying unsafe laser pointers, in contravention of the Consumer Goods Safety Ordinance (CGSO) and its subsidiary legislation, the Consumer Goods Safety Regulation (CGSR).

Customs officers earlier conducted a test-buy operation on two models of laser pointer from a retailer for safety testing. Test results revealed that the products were not equipped with the safety device components required under the relevant safety standard, such as a warning device, beam stop or attenuator. The laser pointers were also marked with a warning with respect to use in English only.

Customs reminds members of the public to avoid eye contact with the light dots emitted by such laser pointers under any circumstances as the beam emitted by the type of laser pointer can pose eye and skin injuries to users.

Under the CGSO, it is an offence to supply, manufacture or import into Hong Kong consumer goods unless the goods comply with the general safety requirements for consumer goods. Under the CGSR, where consumer goods or their packages are marked with any warning or caution with respect to their safe keeping, use, consumption or disposal, such a warning or caution shall be in both the English and Chinese languages. The maximum penalty is a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for one year on first conviction, and \$500,000 and imprisonment for two years on subsequent conviction.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the CGSO or the CGSR to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

LCQ21: Providing financial assistance to victims of marine traffic accidents

Following is a question by the Hon Holden Chow and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (May 29):

Question:

In response to a vessel collision incident near Lamma Island that happened on October 1, 2012, the Government announced on October 18, 2012 that the Marine Department (MD) would, in consultation with the trade, explore the implementation of 10 improvement measures. One of the measures was to consider, by drawing reference from the Traffic Accident Victims Assistance (TAVA) Scheme, whether a Marine Traffic Accident Victims Assistance (M-TAVA) Scheme should be introduced. On the other hand, the Government set up a Steering Committee on Systemic Reform of the Marine Department (Steering Committee) on May 3, 2013 to advise and steer the Director of Marine on undertaking a comprehensive systemic review and reform. The Steering Committee indicated in its final report published in April 2016 that having considered the findings of a consultancy study, it had agreed not to introduce an M-TAVA Scheme at the present stage. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the assistance schemes through which the Government currently provides financial assistance to victims of marine traffic accidents;

(2) in respect of each of the assistance schemes mentioned in (1), of (i) the respective numbers of marine traffic accident victims to whom financial assistance was provided, and (ii) the total amounts of subsidy granted to such persons, in each year since 2012; and

(3) whether it will consider extending the scope of the TAVA Scheme to cover victims of marine traffic accidents; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In response to the Hon Holden Chow's question, in consultation with the Marine Department (MD), the Social Welfare Department and the Home Affairs Department, our reply is as follows:

In October 2012, the Government announced that it would take forward 10 measures to enhance marine safety. One of these measures was to consider, by drawing reference to the Traffic Accident Victims Assistance (TAVA) Scheme, whether a Marine Traffic Accident Victims Assistance (M-TAVA) Scheme should be set up. Subsequently, MD engaged a consultant to study the feasibility of establishing the M-TAVA Scheme, as well as whether or not the TAVA Scheme could be extended to cover victims of marine traffic accidents. After careful examination and consultation with the trade, the consultant found that the definition of a marine traffic accident was more complicated than that of a road traffic accident and that the probability of a marine traffic accident was relatively lower. The severity of marine traffic accidents was also found to be different from that of road traffic accidents. Furthermore, should the coverage of the relevant assistance scheme be expanded to cover victims of marine traffic accidents, a levy would need to be imposed on the vessel trade to cover the financial assistance granted in cases of marine traffic accidents. Since the number of vessels was much smaller than that of vehicles, it was estimated that a rather high levy would need to be charged

and the vessel trade would have concern with regard to the associated financial burden. In view of the considerations above, the consultant concluded that it was impracticable to expand the coverage of the existing TAVA Scheme to include victims of marine traffic accidents. The Government accepted the findings and recommendations of the consultancy study, and reported the relevant findings of the study to the Legislative Council Panel on Economic Development in 2015, and received support from Members.

While at present there is yet to be a dedicated financial assistance scheme set up for victims of marine traffic accidents, there are nonetheless numerous charitable trusts and funds administered by the Government or other organisations which could provide emergency financial relief to victims of marine traffic accidents. These include the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, the General Chinese Charities Fund, the Special Aid Fund, the Tang Shiu Kin and Ho Tim Charitable Fund, etc. Given the various charitable trusts and funds involved, the large volume and diverse backgrounds across different types of application cases they receive, as well as the individual processes and mechanisms of handling, sorting and recording approved cases used in each charitable trust/fund, we do not have the readily available breakdown on the financial assistance granted to victims of marine traffic accidents by each assistance scheme and thus cannot provide the relevant information.