

Applications invited for 37th Personalised Vehicle Registration Marks exercise

The Transport Department (TD) today (August 31) announced that the 37th invitation exercise in the Personalised Vehicle Registration Marks (PVRMs) Scheme will be launched on September 1.

"Starting from September 1, applications are invited under the 37th invitation exercise for the allocation of PVRMs upon sale by auction. Completed application forms should reach the department no later than September 30. If there are more than 1 500 applications, those to be considered will be selected by lot," a TD spokesman said.

Interested persons should complete and submit the application forms (TD569). Those who possess a digital certificate may also make use of the online application service at the GovHK website (www.gov.hk).

Application forms (TD569) and Guidance Notes for Application can be downloaded from the TD's website (www.td.gov.hk) or obtained from the TD's Licensing Offices as well as the Public Enquiry Service Centres of the Home Affairs Department. Completed applications can be put in the drop-in box at any of the TD's Licensing Offices or posted to Vehicle Registration Marks Unit, Transport Department, Room 506-508, 5/F, Harcourt House, 39 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong. Applications received by mail will be dated by the postmark. No payment of deposit is required at this stage.

Applicants are advised to read carefully the Guidance Notes for details of the scheme before completing the application forms. They can also check whether a proposed PVRM is in compliance with the basic combination requirements by using the online service at the GovHK webpage at www.gov.hk/en/residents/transport/vehicle/oneservices.htm.

Each applicant may submit only one application in each exercise. If an applicant submits more than one application, none of his/her applications will be processed. Once submitted, the applicant cannot withdraw the application or change the arrangement of the PVRM stated in the application form.

An acknowledgement will immediately be sent to the applicant upon successful submission of online application. Those who submit the applications by TD569 will receive TD's acknowledgement by ordinary post within two weeks after submission. Applicants who do not receive the acknowledgement within this time frame should call the TD hotline at 2804 2600.

Schedule for issuing press releases on statistical data

Following is a reminder of the press releases on statistical data to be issued between September and November 2018. The schedule for issuing press releases on statistical data in 2018 was provided to the media in September 2017. No change has been made to the original schedule.

September 2018

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Date	Press Release
6	Statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for second quarter 2018
10	Quarterly business receipts indices for service industries for second quarter 2018
11	Construction output statistics for second quarter 2018
11	Statistics on trade involving outward processing in the mainland of China for second quarter 2018
13	Index of industrial production and producer price index for the industrial sector for second quarter 2018
14	Gross National Income and external primary income flows for second quarter 2018
18	Unemployment and underemployment statistics for June – August 2018
19	Chain volume measures of Gross Domestic Product by economic activity for second quarter 2018
20	Consumer Price Index for August 2018
20	Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for July 2018
20	Employment and vacancies statistics for June 2018
21	Balance of Payments and International Investment Position statistics for second quarter 2018

27 External merchandise trade statistics for August 2018

27 Wage and payroll statistics for June 2018

October 2018

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Date	Press Release
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2	Retail sales statistics for August 2018
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18	Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for August 2018
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19	Unemployment and underemployment statistics for July – September 2018
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19	Business expectations for fourth quarter 2018
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23	Consumer Price Index for September 2018
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25	External merchandise trade statistics for September 2018
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26	Salary indices for managerial and professional employees for June 2018
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November 2018

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Date	Press Release
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1	Retail sales statistics for September 2018
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5	Restaurant receipts and purchases statistics for third quarter 2018
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15	Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for September 2018
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16	Gross Domestic Product for third quarter 2018 : data contained in the press release entitled "Economic Situation in the Third Quarter of 2018 and Latest GDP and Price Forecasts for 2018" issued by the Office of the Government Economist under the Financial Secretary's Office (Note)
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16	Unemployment and underemployment statistics for August – October 2018
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20	Consumer Price Index for October 2018
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26	External merchandise trade statistics for October 2018
30	Retail sales statistics for October 2018

Note: The Office of the Government Economist under the Financial Secretary's Office will issue a press release on the Third Quarter Economic Report 2018 and final update of the GDP and prices forecasts for 2018 as a whole. The GDP for the third quarter of 2018 will also be released there. No separate press release on the GDP for the third quarter of 2018 will be issued by the Census and Statistics Department on that day.

The schedule for regular press releases in the other months of 2018 can be downloaded from the website of the Census and Statistics Department (www.censtatd.gov.hk/press_release/index.jsp).

SWD invites eligible elderly to apply for additional vouchers under Second Phase of Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (August 31) started inviting eligible elderly persons to apply for an additional 1 000 vouchers under the Second Phase of the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly.

The SWD will send letters to eligible elderly persons to invite them to join the Scheme. Elderly persons eligible to apply for the vouchers must satisfy the following conditions: (1) having been assessed as moderately or severely impaired under the SWD's Standardised Care Need Assessment Mechanism for Elderly Services; (2) waitlisted for subsidised community care service (CCS) and/or residential care service (RCS) under the Central Waiting List for Subsidised Long Term Care Services for the Elderly with application dates no later than the end of March 2018; and (3) not receiving any kind of RCS or subsidised CCS.

An SWD spokesman said, "The Government's elderly policy direction accords priority to the provision of home care and community care, supplemented by residential care. Funding from the Lotteries Fund was allocated to launch the First Phase and Second Phase of the Scheme in September 2013 and October 2016 respectively, which allowed needy elderly persons to receive community care services under the 'money-following-the-user' funding approach. Government subsidy was provided directly for eligible elderly persons in the form of voucher so that they could choose the service

packages which best suit their needs. To enhance community care and support services, the Government will issue an additional 1 000 vouchers from October 2018, making up a total of 6 000 vouchers."

The spokesman noted that the voucher value will be expanded to five different voucher values ranging from \$3,930 to \$9,390 with effect from October 2018 to suit individual needs and choice. Under the "affordable users pay" principle, the less an elderly person can afford, the more the Government will subsidise. The SWD will determine the co-payment level, one of the six categories ranging from 5 per cent to 40 per cent of the voucher service package values, for elderly persons based on their household income.

Currently, 125 Recognised Service Providers (RSPs) have joined the Second Phase of the Scheme, providing a total of about 2 300 day care places and about 3 300 home care places. Voucher holders may choose centre-based service and/or home-based service in accordance with their needs and, if necessary, may use residential respite service.

The SWD spokesman added that for details of the Scheme, the list of RSPs and information on the dates of application for subsidised long-term care services for eligible elderly persons issued with invitation letters, people may visit the SWD website (www.swd.gov.hk). They may also browse the SWD Elderly Information Website (elderlyinfo.swd.gov.hk) for details about the services of each RSP.

Eligible elderly persons or their carers/relatives who have enquiries on the application for the Second Phase of the Scheme or selection of RSPs or service packages may approach the SWD's Centralised Team of the Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly, or the responsible workers of the elderly persons, for assistance, the spokesman added. The telephone number of the Centralised Team, 3107 3013, will operate from Mondays to Fridays, 9.30am to 1pm and 2.30pm to 5pm, except on public holidays.

[Return of requisition forms urged](#)

Rates and/or government rent payers who have received the requisition forms (R1A) issued by the Rating and Valuation Department are reminded to complete and return the forms to the department as soon as possible. They can also complete and return the forms by using the Electronic Submission of Forms service provided at the department's website (www.rvd.gov.hk).

The department issued about 330 000 R1A forms to rates and/or government rent payers this month to obtain rents and tenancy details for different categories of properties to assist in the determination of rateable values for the next general revaluation.

Anyone having difficulty in completing and returning the forms within the specified period must apply in writing for an extension of time before the end of the stipulated period and should state their reasons.

Anyone who knowingly makes a false statement or refuses to furnish any of the particulars specified in the form commits an offence and will be liable to a maximum fine of \$25,000 or \$10,000 respectively and also a fine equivalent to three times the rates and/or government rent undercharged.

Rates and/or government rent payers are reminded to affix sufficient postage if they return the forms by post to ensure timely and successful postal delivery.

Enquiries on how to complete the form can be made by calling the number printed on the form, or visiting the department at 15/F, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices, 303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon. The department's website also provides answers to commonly asked questions on completing the form.

Illegal worker jailed

A Pakistani illegal worker holding a recognisance form was jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (August 30).

During a joint operation conducted by the Immigration Department (ImmD), the Hong Kong Police Force and the Labour Department codenamed "Champion" on July 18, enforcement officers raided a location in San Po Kong. A male Pakistani illegal worker, aged 51, was arrested. When intercepted he was conveying goods. Upon identity checking, he produced for inspection a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits him from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that he was a non-refoulement claimant.

The illegal worker was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. He pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied

in such cases.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening on vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation, with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.