

OFCA organises third 5G Campus Application Competition (with photos)

Riding on the success of the 5G Campus Application Competitions held in the past two years, the Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA) organises the third edition of the Competition this year under the theme "5G x Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) – The Sky is the Limit for Knowledge" to enhance students' understanding of the fifth generation mobile (5G) technology and the UAS, and encourage them to explore the application of 5G technology in the low-altitude economy, with a view to boosting their creativity and tapping their potential in innovative technologies.

Speaking at the Kick-off Ceremony cum Seminar of the Competition today (May 10), the Director-General of Communications, Mr Chaucer Leung, said, "The 5G Campus Application Competition held last year focused on 5G and artificial intelligence (AI). It was encouraging to see the participating students' innovative thinking and dedication to research and development in terms of 5G and AI applications, scenario design and collaboration, as demonstrated in the final entries. OFCA organises the third Competition this year to encourage participating students to make use of the unique advantages of 5G technology and explore how to collect data through drones for developing various application solutions for the low-altitude economy, so as to stimulate the innovation and technology potentials of the younger generation, expanding their knowledge and transform their creative thinking into practical solutions for the future.

"In Hong Kong, drone systems have started to be deployed in applications and trials on the low-altitude economy. They generally operate in airspace within an altitude of 1 000 metres and could be used in scenarios such as emergency rescues, logistics, surveys, maintenance, safety inspections and show performances. The low-altitude economy not only activates low-altitude airspace as a new element for economic development, but also drives the development of communications technology, AI, and the digital industry, bringing new experiences of smart living to the public. The current well-developed 5G network of Hong Kong has laid a solid foundation for the development of the low-altitude economy," Mr Leung added.

This year's Competition is co-organised by the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) and will be held in stages, comprising the Kick-off Ceremony cum Seminar, the 5G x UAS Inspiration Training Workshop, the first-round adjudication, the Drone Operation and Mobile App Development Training Workshop, and the final-round adjudication cum award presentation ceremony. Participating teams are required to design an innovative mobile application and/or relevant prototype to demonstrate how the data collected by drones can be used and integrated with 5G technology for applications in the low-altitude economy so as to achieve at least one of the specific objectives of the Competition, such as enriching campus life, improving learning environment, optimising teaching resources or learning experience, improving nearby community environment or facilities, realising smart living

development in real-life scenarios, and creating economic or social benefits.

The Chief Digital Officer of the HKPC, Mr Edmond Lai, also officiated at the event today. Veteran practitioners of the innovative technology and education sectors were invited to share with students and other participants the latest developments of 5G technology and the low-altitude economy. A representative from the HKPC also briefed the audience about the requirements and points to note of the Competition.

The Competition is supported by the communications sector as well as various educational organisations, including the Communications Association of Hong Kong, the Association of I.T. Leaders in Education, the Hong Kong Association for Computer Education, the Hong Kong Competence Education Foundation, the Association of Hong Kong Chinese Middle Schools, the Hong Kong Computer Society, the Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers and the Hong Kong STEM Education Alliance.

The Competition is open to secondary students. The deadline of registration is May 30. Participants should take part as a school team consisting of three to five students and a teacher as team leader. To enrol in and learn more about the Competition, please visit [OFCA's website](#).



Hospital Authority discovers suspected contamination in a batch of flocked swabs

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) today (May 10) announces an event of the discovery of suspected contamination in a batch of upper respiratory tract flocked swabs:

The Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) laboratory recently conducted routine testing on a batch of three-in-one (viral transport medium and flocked swabs) specimen collection kits and detected anomalies, with subsequent testing revealing weak positive results for COVID-19 in some flocked swab samples. The HA takes this event very seriously and, upon receiving the report from PMH, a series of measures have been implemented immediately to ensure patient safety and testing accuracy:

- Immediate suspension of all flocked swabs from this supplier and arrangement of alternative flocked swabs from other suppliers;
- Enhanced sampling and testing of the supplier's specimen collection kits delivered in January this year that had previously passed routine sampling tests; and
- Review of test results of patients who had used the affected flocked swabs.

The HA conducted repeated testing on 100 samples from the same Lot of flocked swabs, ultimately identifying 18 samples that showed weak positive results for COVID-19.

The flocked swabs were procured from a local supplier and delivered to the hospitals under the Kowloon West Cluster (KWC), including Caritas Medical Centre, Kwai Chung Hospital, North Lantau Hospital, PMH and Yan Chai Hospital (YCH) from January to the end of April this year. Since the flocked swabs were sealed in packaging, the HA's microbiology experts, after analysing the test results, estimate that the flocked swabs were contaminated before delivery to the hospitals.

In addition, the HA has reviewed the patient cases that used these flocked swabs for COVID-19 testing from January this year onwards. A 91-year-old female patient admitted to PMH and an 82-year-old male patient admitted to YCH were identified as likely false positive. Both patients had CT values above 38, showed no obvious respiratory infection symptoms, and were immediately tested negative on repeated testing by doctors. No antiviral medication was prescribed, and both patients have been discharged earlier. The hospitals have informed these two patients about this event.

After consulting microbiology experts, the HA has determined that the residual virus on the contaminated flocked swabs is biologically inactive and non-infectious, and there is no health risk to patients who have undergone testing with these flocked swabs.

Records show that approximately 27 000 flocked swabs from the lot concerned were used in KWC. Besides the two possible false positive cases mentioned above, no other unusual cases were identified. The recent COVID-19 positive rates in KWC remain comparable to other hospital clusters.

A spokesperson stated, "The HA is following up on this event stringently and has notified the Department of Health (DH). We have demanded the supplier of the flocked swabs concerned to thoroughly investigate its quality control and testing records, provide an explanation, and implement remedial measures. The HA does not rule out taking further action to hold the supplier accountable."

The flocked swabs concerned are BABIO Lot No. 24090511, primarily supplied to the hospitals under KWC. This event does not affect patient clinical treatment or testing services.

The HA will continue to closely follow up with DH and the supplier. The supplier will be required to provide quality control records and testing certifications in the future to prove that their testing supplies meet with the stringent requirements so as to ascertain patient safety and testing accuracy.

SLW to attend APEC Ministerial Meeting in Korea

The Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, will depart for Jeju, Korea, tomorrow (May 11) to attend the Seventh Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Human Resources Development Ministerial Meeting.

During his visit, Mr Sun will also meet with senior officials responsible for manpower and labour issues from APEC member economy governments, including Korea.

Mr Sun will return to Hong Kong on May 13. In his absence, the Under Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Ho Kai-ming, will be the Acting Secretary for Labour and Welfare.

Remarks by SLW on closure of Ocean Empire Food Shop

Below are the remarks by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, on the closure of Ocean Empire Food Shop at a media session after attending a radio programme today morning (May 10):

Reporter: What is the Labour Department's current plan of action regarding the unpaid wages and severance payment owed to former employees of Ocean Empire Food Shop? What steps are the Labour Department taking to ensure these contributions are recovered and paid to the workers? The second question is, what steps are the Government taking to strengthen employment protection and prevent similar situations to recur in future? Thank you.

Secretary for Labour and Welfare: Right now our top priority is to help the 100 or so workers, local or imported, to get what they should get under the law, i.e. their unpaid salaries, unpaid leave as well as severance payment. We are helping them to apply for support under the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund against insolvency and wage default. It takes a bit of time, but they don't have to worry. Right now, under the Fund, be it unpaid salaries, unpaid leave as well as severance payment, there is a well-established mechanism for them to get back money that is owed to them. We are working closely with the employers because with their help, it could speed up the whole process. In Hong Kong we have very elaborated labour laws providing much needed and necessary protection for our workers, and such protection applies to both local and imported workers.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the remarks.)

InvestHK promotes Hong Kong as Asia's business launch pad in Eastern Europe and Middle East (with photo)

Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) announced today (May 10) that the Director-General of Investment Promotion at InvestHK, Ms Alpha Lau, will embark on a series of visits to Istanbul, Türkiye; Budapest, Hungary; and Cairo, Egypt, some of the key economies along the Belt and Road, to strengthen economic ties and promote Hong Kong as the premier gateway for businesses to expand into the Mainland and the Asia-Pacific region.

Ms Lau said, "Hong Kong's unique advantages as a global financial hub

and Asia's business launch pad make it the perfect partner for enterprises from Türkiye, Hungary and Egypt in expanding into the Mainland, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) markets, and further in Asia and beyond. Anchored in the Belt and Road Initiative, we look forward to fostering collaboration and showcasing how Hong Kong can drive their success across the region."

She added that Hong Kong offers unmatched access to the Mainland and the Asia-Pacific region through initiatives such as the Greater Bay Area and its Free Trade Agreement with ASEAN. The city's business-friendly environment, free capital movement and a robust innovation and technology ecosystem hosting nearly 10 000 companies from overseas and the Mainland, and close to 4 700 start-ups, empowers businesses to innovate and grow.

Ms Lau will arrive in Istanbul tomorrow (May 11, Istanbul time) to engage with Turkish companies from various sectors which are interested in using Hong Kong as a springboard to grow across the Asia-Pacific region. She will speak at different events, including an Istanbul Chamber of Commerce Business Seminar, a Foreign Economic Relations Board of Türkiye Business Seminar, and meet with Turkish media to highlight Hong Kong's business-friendly environment, which includes a low and simple tax regime, free capital flow, and a common law system under the "one country, two systems" principle.

In 2024, Türkiye was Hong Kong's 30th largest trading partner, with bilateral merchandise trade between the two places amounting to HK\$16.6 billion. The Hong Kong–Türkiye comprehensive avoidance of double taxation agreement signed in 2024 enhances tax certainty, facilitating cross-border transactions.

Since Türkiye's inclusion in Hong Kong's Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales has supported Hong Kong companies expanding into the Turkish market. To further strengthen bilateral business ties, InvestHK set up a second office in Izmir in January 2025 to promote opportunities that Hong Kong offers to Turkish corporates seeking regional expansion.

On May 13 (Budapest time), Ms Lau will arrive in Budapest to meet major Hungarian companies keen on using Hong Kong as a regional hub for Asia-Pacific expansion. She will meet with media to update them on Hong Kong's latest business environment and opportunities. Ms Lau will also attend the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Economic and Trade Cooperation Conference in Hungary.

In 2024, Hungary was Hong Kong's 33rd largest trading partner and around 9.4 per cent (HK\$9.4 billion) of the total merchandise trade between Hungary and the Mainland routed through Hong Kong. Hong Kong serves as a gateway for Hungarian businesses targeting Asian markets, leveraging its role as "super connector" under the Belt and Road Initiative, while Hungary benefits from Hong Kong's open investment environment. Hungarian manufacturing, technology, and healthtech companies can tap Hong Kong's vibrant innovation and technology ecosystem, backed by global capital and world-class universities,

to grow in ASEAN and China's Greater Bay Area.

On May 17 (Cairo time), Ms Lau will visit Cairo to connect with global Egyptian businesses eager to establish operations in Hong Kong to seize Asia-Pacific opportunities. She will also attend the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Economic and Trade Cooperation Conference in Cairo.

In 2023, InvestHK signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones of the Arab Republic of Egypt, pledging mutual co-operation on investment promotion exchanges and support. In 2024, bilateral merchandise trade between Hong Kong and Egypt amounted to HK\$2.1 billion, up 5.4 per cent over 2023.

