

Remarks by STL on LAE Regulatory Sandbox at media session

Following are the remarks by the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Ms Mable Chan, at a media session after attending the Low-altitude Economy Regulatory Sandbox – Launch Event today (March 20):

Reporter: When will the projects start testing and officially be of service? How will the Government help researchers overcome any regulatory obstacles that they might face? Thank you.

Secretary for Transport and Logistics: The trial of the sandbox projects will help us accumulate experience and data in order to enable the Government and relevant departments to map out and devise a comprehensive infrastructure support for the execution of various low-altitude economy activities.

With the amendment of the existing regulation regulating the low-altitude flying drones, we would like to increase the existing weight limit, so as to facilitate heavier and more sophisticated drones to be flying. On the other hand, we will also introduce a special provision enabling the Director-General of Civil Aviation to allow trials of even more sophisticated and heavier low-altitude equipment, so as to facilitate our trial of the state-of-the-art models, including those models which can carry passengers.

With the launch of the various sandbox projects from April and in the coming months ahead, we really hope that the society and the members of the public will visualise the projects, and they can even touch these projects. We hope that with all these projects launching, we would incorporate innovation and technology into our daily lives.

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

Hong Kong maintains third place globally with higher rating in Global Financial Centres Index

Hong Kong maintained third place globally, with the overall rating increasing by 11 points to 760, slightly closing the gap in rating with first place, in the Global Financial Centres Index (GFCI) 37 Report published today (March 20) by Z/Yen from the United Kingdom and the China Development Institute from Shenzhen. Hong Kong also continued to rank first in the Asia Pacific.

A Government spokesman said, "The report fully recognises Hong Kong's leading status and strengths as an international financial centre. Hong Kong's rankings in the areas of 'human capital', 'infrastructure', and 'financial sector development' rose to second in the world, while rankings in 'business environment' and 'reputational and general' rose to third globally."

Hong Kong also ranked among the top in various financial industry sectors. Among these, Hong Kong ranked first globally in "investment management", "insurance" and "finance", and ranked third globally in "banking". In addition, the report assessed the financial centres' fintech offering, and Hong Kong's ranking leapt further by five places to fourth in the world.

The spokesman added, "With the staunch support of our country, Hong Kong will continue to leverage the advantages under 'one country, two systems', actively integrate into national development, and deepen international exchanges and co-operation, with a view to fulfilling our roles as a 'super connector' and a 'super value-adder'. Finance is an important tool to support the development of the real economy. A series of policy initiatives have been announced in the 2025-26 Budget, pressing ahead with the high-quality development of Hong Kong's international financial market to create more new growth areas.

"On the stock market, various institutional reforms, including enhancing the timeframe for the listing application process and listing requirements for specialist technology companies, coupled with the Government's active efforts to attract new capital from the Mainland and overseas and expand new markets, have injected new impetus into the Hong Kong market and improved its liquidity. We also endeavour to deepen financial mutual access between the Mainland and Hong Kong and have implemented a number of measures to enrich and support offshore Renminbi (RMB) business, such as enhancing the settlement arrangements of Bond Connect and launching offshore RMB bond repurchase business using Northbound Bond Connect bonds as collateral, further strengthening Hong Kong's role in connecting the Mainland and international capital markets.

"On asset and wealth management business, the Government has implemented measures to continuously promote its development over the past year, including enhancements to the Cross-boundary Wealth Management Connect Scheme in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, Exchange-traded Fund Connect, and the Mainland-Hong Kong Mutual Recognition of Funds arrangement. On green finance, we launched in December last year a roadmap on sustainability disclosure in Hong Kong, which provides a well-defined pathway for large publicly accountable entities to fully adopt the International Financial Reporting Standards – Sustainability Disclosure Standards (ISSB Standards) no later than 2028, leading Hong Kong to be among the first jurisdictions to align its local requirements with the ISSB Standards. On fintech, we will soon promulgate a second policy statement on the development of virtual assets to explore the integration of traditional finance and

virtual assets. We will also continue to explore new growth areas, including promoting gold market development and creating a commodity trading ecosystem in Hong Kong."

The GFCI Report has been released every March and September since 2007. In GFCI 37, 119 financial centres were assessed, and Hong Kong ranked third globally with an overall rating of 760.

EPD participates in International Water Conference and shares Hong Kong's water quality management strategies in Sri Lanka (with photos)

Deputy Director of Environmental Protection Dr Vanessa Au led a delegation of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) to participate in the International Water Conference, the 50th Anniversary Commemoration of the National Water Supply and Drainage Board of Sri Lanka and the 10th Anniversary of China-Sri Lanka Water Technology Cooperation and the World Water Day event in Sri Lanka. The delegation engaged in exchanges with representatives from various regions with a view to jointly achieving the goal of high-quality green and sustainable development under the Belt and Road (B&R) initiative.

The Conference, organised by the National Water Supply and Drainage Board of Sri Lanka, took place in Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka, on March 19 and 20. It was aimed at fostering international co-operation and technical exchanges between Sri Lanka and the international community in advancing climate resilience and sustainable management of the water environment. Dr Au and the EPD delegation attended the Conference yesterday (March 19). The Conference was also attended by representatives including those from the Research Center for Eco-Environmental Sciences of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Sri Lanka's Central Environmental Authority (CEA), the Ministry of Urban Development, Construction and Housing, and the Department of National Community Water Supply, as well as research institutes and universities from the B&R countries and other regions.

Dr Au attended an exchange meeting with Sri Lanka's CEA today (March 20), where she introduced Hong Kong's management strategies for improving air quality and shared the city's successful experiences in setting up an air quality monitoring network.

The EPD delegation will attend the 50th Anniversary Commemoration of the National Water Supply and Drainage Board of Sri Lanka and the 10th

Anniversary of China-Sri Lanka Water Technology Cooperation and the World Water Day event tomorrow (March 21). On March 22, the delegation will visit Kandy to attend the International Water Conference on Climate Change and Environmental Pollution: Challenges and Solutions for Food Security and Public Health organised by the China-Sri Lanka Joint Research and Demonstration Centre for Water Technology. The delegation will also visit the University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka to learn about its latest green technology developments and hold technical exchanges with local researchers.



Monthly gravidtrap index for Aedes albopictus mosquitoes of February remains at lowest level

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (March 20) announced that the monthly gravidtrap index for Aedes albopictus mosquitoes in February dropped further, to 0.03 per cent from 0.2 per cent in January this year. The index in February remained at the lowest Level 1, indicating that the distribution of Aedes albopictus mosquitoes in the areas surveyed was not extensive.

In February, all 64 survey areas recorded a gravidtrap index level lower than the alert level of 20 per cent. Moreover, the monthly density index for Aedes albopictus in February was 1, which means that an average of one Aedes albopictus adult was found in the Aedes-positive gravidtraps, indicating that the number of adult Aedes albopictus was not abundant in the survey areas. The gravidtrap and density indices for Aedes albopictus in different survey areas, as well as information on mosquito prevention and control measures, are available on the department website at www.fehd.gov.hk.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "The FEHD has continued to intensify mosquito prevention and control work with relevant government departments in areas under their purview, including eliminating mosquito breeding places,

applying larvicides, conducting fogging operations to eradicate adult mosquitoes, and placing mosquito trapping devices at suitable locations. The FEHD has also provided government departments with professional advice and technical support to assist them in swiftly formulating and implementing effective anti-mosquito measures while strengthening publicity and education at the same time. Under the concerted efforts and collaboration of various parties, the index in February remained at the lowest level. Although the index remains at a low level, the warm and humid weather of spring is favourable for mosquito breeding. The FEHD will continue to monitor the mosquito infestation in all districts, and will conduct prompt and effective mosquito prevention and control work. Members of the public are reminded to continue the routine mosquito prevention and control work, especially the repair and maintenance of structures. Cracks and dents which may accumulate water and become potential breeding grounds should be filled and levelled to reduce the chance of mosquito breeding when the rainy season approaches."

The FEHD will conduct a three-phase Anti-mosquito Campaign this year. The first phase of the territory-wide campaign was launched on February 17 and ended on March 14. During the period, the district offices of the FEHD targeted areas that have drawn particular concern, such as public markets, cooked food centres and hawker bazaars, single-block buildings, streets and back lanes, common parts of buildings, village houses, construction sites, vacant sites and road works sites, to remove accumulated water and carry out mosquito prevention and control work. After the first phase of the campaign, the FEHD will conduct territory-wide thematic special operations on mosquito prevention and control, such as strengthening mosquito control at individual construction sites. To further enhance the effectiveness of mosquito control, the FEHD and relevant government departments will carry out phase one of the All-out Anti-mosquito Operations from March 10 to focus on eliminating potential mosquito breeding places, and called on property management groups to arrange necessary repairs to their premises to minimise mosquito breeding places before the breeding season. Furthermore, intense adult mosquito control will follow by means of regular ultra-low volume fogging operations during the rainy season.

The FEHD appeals to members of the public to continue to stay alert and work together to carry out mosquito prevention and control measures early, including inspecting their homes and surroundings to remove potential breeding grounds, changing water in vases and scrubbing their inner surfaces, removing water in saucers under potted plants at least once a week, properly disposing of containers such as soft drink cans and lunch boxes, and drilling large holes in unused tyres. The FEHD also advises members of the public and estate management bodies to keep drains free of blockage and level all defective ground surfaces to prevent the accumulation of water. They should also scrub all drains and surface sewers with an alkaline detergent at least once a week to remove any mosquito eggs.

Aedes albopictus is a kind of mosquito that can transmit dengue fever (DF). DF is commonly found in tropical and subtropical regions of the world, and has become endemic in many countries in Southeast Asia. In 2024, the World Health Organization recorded over 14 million DF cases, which was a

record number. The dengue activity in neighbouring areas has remained high. Members of the public should stay vigilant and continue to carry out effective mosquito prevention and control measures.

Fraudulent website and internet banking login screen related to Fubon Bank (Hong Kong) Limited

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by Fubon Bank (Hong Kong) Limited relating to a fraudulent website and an internet banking login screen, which have been reported to the HKMA. A hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#).

The HKMA wishes to remind the public that banks will not send SMS or emails with embedded hyperlinks which direct them to the banks' websites to carry out transactions. They will not ask customers for sensitive personal information, such as login passwords or one-time password, by phone, email or SMS (including via embedded hyperlinks).

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information, or who has conducted any financial transactions, through or in response to the website or login screen concerned, should contact the bank using the contact information provided in the press release, and report the matter to the Police by contacting the Crime Wing Information Centre of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.