

Appointments to Hong Kong Tourism Board announced

The Government announced today (February 19) the appointment of Dr Peter Lam Kin-ngok to succeed Dr Pang Yiu-kai as Chairman of the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) from April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2028. Mr Jeffrey Lam Kin-fung, Ms Nikki Ng Mien-hua and Ms Melissa Kaye Pang are also appointed as new members of the HKTB from April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2027.

Commenting on the appointments, the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Miss Rosanna Law, said, "Dr Peter Lam Kin-ngok, who served as Chairman of the HKTB before, possesses rich experience in promoting tourism development in Hong Kong. With his diverse experiences in business management and public services, along with a strong vision, Dr Lam is the best candidate to lead the HKTB and the tourism sector of Hong Kong to reach new heights. I am confident that under Dr Lam's leadership, the Board will advance further while promoting Hong Kong worldwide and showcasing its charms, so that visitors will indulge in pleasure when staying in Hong Kong, thinking about Hong Kong, and returning time and again. I also welcome Mr Jeffrey Lam Kin-fung, Ms Nikki Ng Mien-hua and Ms Melissa Kaye Pang to join the Board."

Miss Law expressed heartfelt gratitude to Dr Pang for his distinguished contributions to the HKTB. "With Dr Pang's foresight, seasoned business and management experiences, as well as an extensive business network, he has guided the HKTB with exemplary leadership in successfully overcoming various challenges during the pandemic and actively driving the recovery of Hong Kong tourism," Miss Law said.

A brief biographical note of Dr Lam is set out below:

Dr Lam is the Chairman of Lai Sun Group. He is currently the Chairman of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and a member of the Advisory Committee on Attracting Strategic Enterprises, the Chief Executive's Council of Advisers, and the Trade and Industry Advisory Board.

Appointments to the HKTB are made by the Chief Secretary for Administration in exercise of the powers delegated to him by the Chief Executive and pursuant to section 9 of the Hong Kong Tourism Board Ordinance (Chapter 302).

The membership of the HKTB commencing April 1, 2025, will be as follows:

Dr Peter Lam Kin-ngok (Chairman)
Commissioner for Tourism (Deputy Chairman) with Deputy Commissioner for Tourism as alternate member
Mr Abraham Chan
Mr Dennis Chow Chi-in
Ms Margaret Fong Shun-man

Dr Allen Fung Yuk-lun
Mrs Gianna Hsu Wong Mei-lun
Ms Mary Huen Wai-yi
Mrs Ann Kung Yeung Yun-chi
Ms Rebecca Kwan Shuk-wah
Mr Jeffrey Lam Kin-fung
Ms Lavinia Lau Hoi-zee
Ms Nikki Ng Mien-hua
Ms Melissa Kaye Pang
Dr Chloe Suen Yin-wah
Mr Ricky Szeto Wing-fu
Mr Richard Tsang Lap-ki
Mr James Wong Cheuk-on
Professor Simon Wong Kit-lung
Mr Ronald Wu Keng-hou

Miss Law also thanked the outgoing member, Dr Lam Ho-yi, for her contributions to the work of the Board.

[Government announces appointment of Chairman of Hong Kong Trade Development Council](#)

The Government announced today (February 19) the appointment of Professor Frederick Ma Si-hang to succeed Dr Peter Lam Kin-ngok as Chairman of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) for two years from June 1, 2025, to May 31, 2027.

Commenting on the appointment, the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Algernon Yau, said, "With extremely profound experience in public service as well as the commercial sector, Professor Ma is well suited for taking up the HKTDC chairmanship. I am confident that he will lead the HKTDC to make every effort in assisting enterprises to embrace the challenges arising from the ever changing global trading landscape and actively tap new markets and business opportunities, with a view to further promoting Hong Kong's development as an international trade centre."

"I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the outgoing Chairman, Dr Lam, for his tremendous contributions during his tenure in promoting Hong Kong's advantages and opportunities. Under his chairmanship, the HKTDC has successfully promoted Hong Kong as a two way global investment and business hub and assisted Hong Kong companies in further exploring the business opportunities in the Mainland and overseas brought by the nation's dual circulation strategy, with outstanding achievements particularly in

promoting Hong Kong in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and emerging markets under the Belt and Road Initiative," Mr Yau added.

A brief biographical note of Professor Ma is set out below:

Professor Ma is the non-executive Chairman of the FWD Group, as well as a member of the Chief Executive's Council of Advisers, with extensive experience in public service.

LCQ13: Electric wheelchairs

Following is a question by the Hon Rock Chen and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Ms Mable Chan, in the Legislative Council today (February 19):

Question:

It is learnt that in recent years, more and more people with disabilities and elderly people with impaired mobility have chosen to use electric wheelchairs as a substitute for traditional manual wheelchairs. However, it has been reported that an electric wheelchair user collided with a motorcycle in July last year, arousing public concern about the safety of electric wheelchairs. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of cases in which the Police (i) issued advice to electric wheelchair users and (ii) instituted prosecutions against electric wheelchair users for contravening traffic regulations in each of the past three years, as well as the respective reasons for issuing such advice and instituting such prosecutions;

(2) as the Consumer Council has earlier on recommended that the Government tighten regulation of the use of electric wheelchairs, including limiting their maximum travelling speed, requiring users to take out insurance, etc, whether the Government will, in accordance with the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap. 374), formulate regulations on the use of electric wheelchairs for outdoor travel (e.g. restrictions on the modification of electric wheelchairs, loading requirements, insurance requirements, fire safety standards, prohibition on the carriage of passengers, and maximum speed limits), so as to protect the safety of electric wheelchair users and other road users; if so, of the specific details and timetable; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) as there are views that pavements in many districts in Hong Kong are so narrow that electric wheelchair users may easily come into conflict with pedestrians due to competition for road space, whether relevant government departments will provide additional barrier-free facilities for electric

wheelchair users when planning and constructing roads for new towns and new development areas in the future; if so, of the specific details and timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

Having consulted the Health Bureau, the Hong Kong Police Force (Police) and the Transport Department (TD) in respect of electric wheelchair, my reply to the various parts of the question raised by the Hon Rock Chen is as follows:

(1) The Police does not maintain statistics on enforcement against electric wheelchair users.

(2) Proper use of electric wheelchairs can help ensure the safety of both the wheelchair users and others. The allied health professionals of Hospital Authority (HA) hospitals, when prescribing electric wheelchairs, will teach patients how to use the wheelchairs safely and correctly according to the needs of individual patients. In addition, the Community Rehabilitation Service Support Centre under the HA provides systematic group training for electric wheelchair users so that they could familiarise the skills and attitudes of using the wheelchairs safely in order to cope with different situations including using public transport and public facilities and handling outdoor obstacles.

Under section 4(8) of the Summary Offences Ordinance (Cap. 228), it is an offence if any person, in any public place, drives recklessly or negligently or at a speed or in a manner which is dangerous to the public. As regards the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap. 374), as it seeks to regulate road traffic and the use of vehicles, it is not suitable for further regulation of electric wheelchairs. Nevertheless, the TD will continue to help promoting the safe use of electric wheelchairs to enhance the safety of road users (including pedestrians).

(3) It is the Government's established policy objective to provide barrier-free environment for people in need (including manual or electric wheelchair users) with a view to enabling them to access premises and make use of the facilities and services therein on an equal basis with others, thereby facilitating them to live independently and integrate into the community.

In planning the pedestrian network in new towns and new development areas, the Government will fully consider the needs of pedestrians (including wheelchair users and other people in need), provide footpaths of sufficient width and set up appropriate pedestrian crossing facilities to enhance the travel experience of wheelchair users and other pedestrians.

The Government will keep in contact with organisations of persons with disabilities, and pay heed to their views on the circumstances which they encounter in the daily use of barrier-free access and facilities.

LCQ20: Quality of lunch boxes of primary school lunch suppliers

Following is a question by Dr the Hon So Cheung-wing and a written reply by the Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin, in the Legislative Council today (February 19):

Question:

It is learnt that as most primary schools in Hong Kong are whole-day schools now, students of these schools have to have lunch at school, and many students eat lunch boxes pre-ordered by schools from lunch suppliers (pre-ordered lunch boxes). However, many parents have relayed that the quality of pre-ordered lunch boxes varies, and some students find them unpalatable or discard them just after having a few bites, causing worries about inadequate nutrition uptake in students. There are views that while requiring lunch suppliers to provide nutritious lunches, the Nutritional Guidelines on Lunch for Students published by the Department of Health provide no specific recommendations on the overall food quality of the lunches. On the other hand, it has been reported by Mainland media that many primary schools on the Mainland are equipped with their own canteens, providing students with lunches prepared by cooks on site that are both nutritious and delicious. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it will consider formulating guidelines on the overall food quality of pre-ordered lunch boxes to ensure that students can enjoy lunches that are both nutritious and delicious;
- (2) in the past three years, whether it received complaints from parents about the food quality of pre-ordered lunch boxes; if so, how the complaints were dealt with; and
- (3) whether it will consider emulating the practice of some primary schools in our country and set up canteens at subsidised schools to provide students with nutritious and delicious lunches prepared on site?

Reply:

President,

The Government attaches great importance to healthy eating among children and has been encouraging schools to formulate a policy on healthy eating conducive to promoting students' good eating habits and healthy lifestyle. Schools generally take into account factors like scales of suppliers, food quality and hygiene, prices, views of parents holistically when choosing school lunch suppliers.

In consultation with the Health Bureau, the Department of Health (DH), and the Environment and Ecology Bureau, our consolidated reply to the question raised by Dr the Hon So Cheung-wing is as follows:

(1) The current Nutritional Guidelines on Lunch for Students was published by the DH in 2006 and has been updated ever since. The main objectives of the Guidelines are to ensure that primary and secondary school students can have nutritionally balanced school lunches that meet the needs of their growth and development, and serve as a reference for the quantity and quality of food as stipulated in the contracts signed between schools and lunch suppliers. The Guidelines also recommend the use of ingredients low in oil, salt, and sugar, and more natural ingredients, herbs, and spices to enhance the flavour of dishes, making lunches more appetising. The Education Bureau (EDB) has also issued circulars to call on schools to refer to relevant guidelines when arranging lunch for students and observe the principles of healthy eating such as the suggested ratio of grains, vegetables and meat in a lunch box, and reducing intake of fat, salt and sugar by students. Moreover, it was announced in the Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address that the Whole School Health Programme launched by the DH will be strengthened. Health reports will be compiled for each participating school to recommend targeted school-based health promotion measures, which will include diet arrangements focusing on nutrition, growth and development needs.

(2) The EDB has been promoting home-school co-operation to encourage schools to explain to parents the schools' policy on healthy eating and encourage parents to echo with schools' efforts by guiding their children to consume food with high nutritional value and having the meals with them in order to help children develop healthy eating habits. Schools are also encouraged to engage parents in the discussion of lunch arrangements such as inviting them to join the lunch supplier selection team to formulate lunch requirements, selection criteria and marking scheme. Schools should also maintain communication with parents on the nutritional value and quality of the lunch provided, collect views from parents and students regularly and provide timely feedback to the lunch suppliers so as to jointly monitor and improve the quality of school lunch. If necessary, parents may prepare healthy lunchboxes for their children. From the 2022/23 school year up to January of the current school year, the EDB received a total of two complaints about the food quality of school lunch boxes from parents. The cases were found unsubstantiated after investigation.

(3) Given the different conditions and needs of schools, schools may opt for lunchboxes prepacked by lunch suppliers, or adopt on-site meal portioning as encouraged by the EDB. In on-site meal portioning, school lunch suppliers may cook rice and vegetables on-site and reheat other food (e.g. meat) at the school campuses. Schools built according to the EDB's Schedule of Accommodation updated in 2009/10 are provided with a tuck shop-cum-central portioning area as part of the standard provision of school facilities for implementation of on-site meal portioning.

LCQ18: Combating fraud of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance

Following is a question by the Hon Dominic Lee and a written reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, in the Legislative Council today (February 19):

Question:

It has been reported that the number of fraud cases involving the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) has been on the rise in recent years, and quite a number of them involve the concealment of assets or income outside Hong Kong. Such a situation has aroused concerns. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the respective numbers of reports of suspected CSSA fraud received by the Government and established fraud cases, as well as the amount of overpayment successfully recovered in each of the past five years; among those established fraud cases, of the proportion of cases involving the concealment of assets or income outside Hong Kong;

(2) whether it has assessed if the existing 120 officers under the six special investigation teams of the Social Welfare Department are sufficient to cope with the large number of reported cases, and whether it has plans to increase the manpower for conducting investigations and upgrade the investigation techniques; if it has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(3) whether the Government has adopted technologies (e.g. artificial intelligence or big data analysis methods) to proactively identify and strengthen the monitoring of CSSA cases with high fraud risks; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(4) how the Government currently verifies the CSSA applicants' asset and income profile in the Mainland or overseas; whether it has plans to enhance the mechanism for sharing the relevant information with the Mainland and other regions; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(5) apart from the existing measures in place, whether the Government will consider introducing other measures to combat CSSA fraud, such as increasing penalties, strengthening interdepartmental cooperation within the Government and enhancing the information verification mechanism?

Reply:

President,

As part of Hong Kong's social security system, the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme provides a safety net of last resort for people who cannot support themselves financially due to old age, ill health, disability, single parenthood, unemployment, low earnings or for other reasons to help them meet their basic needs. There are stringent means tests in place under the CSSA Scheme to ensure that finite public resources are targeted at needy persons.

The CSSA applicants and their household members must truthfully declare relevant information including income and assets in and outside Hong Kong when submitting their applications. In processing the applications, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) will interview the applicants, conduct home visits and, where necessary, verify the information submitted by the applicants and/or their household members with their employers, ex-employers or landlords.

The SWD adopts a risk-based approach to processing CSSA cases. This includes regular review of all approved cases through various means (such as interviews, home visits or in writing), whereby recipients will be required to re-declare income and assets such that their continued eligibility for CSSA can be verified; adopting different review cycles for approved cases according to their risk levels; and conducting spot-checks on CSSA cases with appointees or agents to ensure that they have properly managed the cash assistance. In addition, the SWD conducts data-matching with other government departments and organisations (such as the the Immigration Department, Treasury, Land Registry and Companies Registry) periodically and on a need basis for information verification and analysis, so as to identify suspicious cases for in-depth investigation.

In case the SWD suspects that an applicant or a recipient has not truthfully declared income or assets, or has even placed assets outside Hong Kong to circumvent the means tests, the SWD will proactively conduct in-depth investigation and take follow-up actions, and refer more serious cases to enforcement agencies for investigation. Where necessary, the SWD will also proactively communicate and verify with government departments or organisations (such as banks) of the places where assets are allegedly concealed.

If a recipient is no longer eligible for CSSA, the SWD will demand him/her to repay the overpayment (if any) as soon as possible. Anyone who knowingly or wilfully provides false statements or withholds any information to obtain CSSA by deception commits an offence. Apart from being disqualified from CSSA, he/she may even be prosecuted under the Theft Ordinance (Cap. 210), liable to a maximum penalty of 14 years of imprisonment upon conviction.

CSSA fraud is not common. In recent years, the number of substantiated fraud cases only accounted for about 0.1 per cent to 0.3 per cent of the

total number of cases. The relevant figures from 2020-21 to 2024-25 are set out at Annex. The SWD does not maintain a breakdown of CSSA fraud cases with successfully recovered overpayment or involving concealment of assets or income outside Hong Kong.

Staff of the SWD's Social Security Field Units (SSFUs) across districts and its Special Investigation Teams (SITs) vet and review CSSA applications and approved cases as well as investigate suspected CSSA fraud cases according to their respective duties. The SITs underwent a re-structuring in July 2019 and hired an additional Chief Social Security Officer to enhance the monitoring of data-matching and spot checks of cases amongst other duties. In September 2021, the SITs were further staffed up to strengthen the work of case investigation. At present, more than 1 400 Social Security Grade officers in the SWD's SSFUs across districts are involved in vetting applications, reviewing approved cases and investigating suspected cases, while the six SITs comprise about 120 Social Security Grade officers. The SWD also employs three former disciplined forces officers as investigation advisers to assist in handling more complex or serious cases.

To ensure proper use of public monies, the SWD will continue its efforts in counteracting CSSA fraud, and continue to review and optimise the effectiveness of relevant measures, including investigation manpower and methods.