

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (July 10) released the latest grading of water quality for 38 gazetted beaches (see Note 1) and one non-gazetted beach (i.e. Discovery Bay, see Note 2).

Nineteen beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1), 11 as Fair (Grade 2) and nine as Poor (Grade 3).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach*	Middle Bay Beach
Chung Hom Kok Beach	Repulse Bay Beach*
Clear Water Bay First Beach*	Shek O Beach*
Deep Water Bay Beach*	South Bay Beach*
Discovery Bay	St Stephen's Beach
Hap Mun Bay Beach*	Stanley Main Beach*
Hung Shing Yeh Beach*	Trio Beach*
Kiu Tsui Beach	Turtle Cove Beach
Kwun Yam Beach	Upper Cheung Sha Beach
Lo So Shing Beach	

Grade 2 beaches are:

Big Wave Bay Beach*	Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach*
Cafeteria Old Beach	Pui O Beach*
Castle Peak Beach*	Silver Mine Bay Beach*
Clear Water Bay Second Beach*	Silverstrand Beach*
Kadoorie Beach	Tong Fuk Beach
Lower Cheung Sha Beach*	

Grade 3 beaches are:

Anglers' Beach	Golden Beach*
Approach Beach*	Hoi Mei Wan Beach
Butterfly Beach*	Lido Beach*
Cafeteria New Beach*	Ting Kau Beach*
Casam Beach*	

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades, namely Good (Grade 1), Fair (Grade 2), Poor (Grade 3) and Very Poor

(Grade 4), according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the EPD's website on Beach Water Quality (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666.

Note 1: The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced that 25 gazetted beaches (marked with an asterisk above) have reopened, while all the other beaches will remain temporarily closed until further notice.

Note 2: Discovery Bay is a non-gazetted beach without lifeguard service.

Latest situation of Fai Ming Estate and Chun Yeung Estate

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

The Government will grant another \$6,000 ex-gratia payment under the Anti-epidemic Fund to eligible public rental housing (PRH) applicants who have accepted advance allocation offers of Fai Ming Estate in Fanling and Chun Yeung Estate in Fo Tan to further relieve their difficulties. The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) has informed the prospective tenants on the latest situation of the progress of reinstatement of Fai Ming Estate and the arrangements after the cessation of the use of Chun Yeung Estate as a quarantine centre.

"Under the Fund set up by the Government, the Housing Department earlier in mid-April disbursed a one-off ex-gratia payment of \$6,000 per household to eligible PRH applicants who have accepted the advance allocation offers of Fai Ming Estate and Chun Yeung Estate. This was to help them tide over the problems and inconvenience caused by the deferred intake. To provide further assistance, the Government will grant another \$6,000 ex-gratia payment under the Fund to eligible PRH applicants who have accepted the advance allocation offers of Fai Ming Estate and Chun Yeung Estate (but excluding the former prospective tenants of Fai Ming Estate and Chun Yeung Estate who have accepted allocation offers of other PRH estates and have signed the tenancy agreements and collected the flat keys on or before June 30), and they will be informed individually. The ex-gratia payment will be disbursed through cheques by post starting from mid-July," a spokesman for the HA said today (July 10).

The HA has also issued letters to the prospective tenants of Fai Ming

Estate and Chun Yeung Estate informing them of the latest situations of the two estates.

"Consisting of two blocks with about 950 units in total, Fai Ming Estate was seriously vandalised and damaged on January 26. It takes time to complete the reinstatement works and the intake date has been delayed. We have been stepping up our efforts on the reinstatement of Fai Ming Estate. The progress of Sing Fai House is more satisfactory and acceptance testing is being conducted. Having regard to the current progress, Sing Fai House is expected to commence intake gradually from late July. For Tai Fai House, due to the severe damage, longer time for reinstatement works is required and it is expected that its intake could only commence gradually from the end of this year or early next year. We will continue to make our best endeavours to speed up the completion of the reinstatement works.

"For Chun Yeung Estate, the Government announced on June 26 that Chun Yeung Estate would cease to be used as a quarantine centre in late July and be immediately handed over to the HA upon clearance and thorough disinfection of the relevant units. The HA will then immediately carry out detailed inspection on the condition of the estate and conduct relevant restoration works and acceptance testing with a view to completing all the relevant works as early as possible. Chun Yeung Estate consists of five blocks involving some 4 800 units in total and the restoration works required for individual blocks or units vary. Currently the best estimate is that prospective tenants of Chun Yeung Estate will move in under two batches. The intake of the first batch, involving Block 4 (i.e. Chun Sze House) and Block 5 (i.e. Chun Wu House), is estimated to begin gradually from late August. As for Blocks 1 to 3 (i.e. Chun Yat House, Chun Yi House and Chun San House), subject to detailed inspection and the condition of the blocks and units, it is estimated that more extensive restoration works may be required and hence their intake may only commence gradually from late October," the spokesman said.

[Remuneration package for Members of the Seventh LegCo](#)

A Government spokesman said today (July 10) that the Chief Executive in Council (CE-in-Council) has decided that the existing remuneration package for Members of the Sixth Legislative Council (LegCo) (including the annual adjustment mechanism) should continue to be adopted for Members of the Seventh LegCo.

The Independent Commission on Remuneration for Members of the Executive Council and the Legislature, and Officials under the Political Appointment System of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region conducted a thorough

review and recommended certain proposals to enhance the remuneration package for Members of the Seventh LegCo.

The spokesman said, "In arriving at the said decision, whilst the CE-in-Council found the Independent Commission's proposals not unreasonable, it considered it inappropriate to take them forward, having regard to such factors as the prevailing local economic downturn, labour earnings and employment situation, as well as the recent government decision to freeze civil service pay, the pay of politically appointed officials and the honorarium of Executive Council Non-official Members.

"The Government expresses its gratitude towards the Independent Commission for its dedicated efforts in and valuable advice on reviewing the remuneration package for Members of the Seventh LegCo."

In accordance with the said decision, the existing remuneration package for a LegCo Member which will remain unchanged in the Seventh LegCo comprises:

- (a) monthly remuneration at \$101,000 (Note 1);
- (b) end-of-service gratuity at 15 per cent of the total remuneration for the term (payable at term end per term);
- (c) medical allowance at \$35,180 per annum;
- (d) Office Operation Expenses Reimbursement (OoER) at \$2,770,970 per annum;
- (e) Entertainment and Travelling Expenses Reimbursement at \$221,310 per annum;
- (f) President's Entertainment Allowance at \$221,520 per annum;
- (g) Setting Up and Information Technology Expenses Reimbursement at \$375,000 per term (Note 2); and
- (h) Winding Up Expenses Reimbursement (being 1/12 of the annual OoER plus actual severance payments per term).

Components (a), (c), (d), (e) and (f) above will continue to be subject to annual adjustments in October each year in accordance with the movements of the Consumer Price Index(C). Components (b) and (h) above will also be adjusted as a consequence of any adjustment to components (a) and (d) respectively. In accordance with the established arrangement, the next round of annual adjustment will take effect on October 1, 2020.

Save for annual price adjustment to be made, the total funding for the remuneration package for Members of the Seventh LegCo is estimated to be about \$1.3 billion, or about \$18.3 million per Member per term.

The Independent Commission is chaired by Mr Carlson Tong and comprises Professor Leonard Cheng, Ms Lau Ka-shi, Ms Elaine Lo, Mr Philip Tsai and Ms Winnie Wong as members. It advises the Chief Executive, among others, on the remuneration package for LegCo Members. The Independent Commission started a comprehensive review of the remuneration package for Members of the Seventh LegCo in early 2019 and completed it in May 2020.

Note 1: Monthly remuneration of the LegCo President and the President's Deputy are fixed at 200 per cent and 150 per cent of the remuneration for

their fellow LegCo Members respectively.

Note 2: For Members who have claimed setting up expenses in the previous term, they could claim \$262,500 in the new term.

Nineteen persons arrested during anti-illegal worker operations

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted territory-wide anti-illegal worker operations codenamed "Twilight" from July 6 to yesterday (July 9). A total of 13 suspected illegal workers and six suspected employers were arrested.

During the operations, ImmD Task Force officers raided 44 target locations including a bar, factories, fish markets, a garbage collection depot, an industrial building, a massage parlour, premises under renovation, restaurants, a tailor shop, warehouses, a wet market and a wholesale food market. The suspected illegal workers comprised 10 men and three women, aged 28 to 62. Among them, one man and one woman were holders of recognisance forms, which prohibit them from taking any employment. In addition, two men were suspected of using and being in possession of forged Hong Kong identity cards. Meanwhile, four men and two women, aged 38 to 65, were suspected of employing the suspected illegal workers.

"Any person who contravenes a condition of stay in force in respect of him shall be guilty of an offence. Also, visitors are not allowed to take employment in Hong Kong, whether paid or unpaid, without the permission of the Director of Immigration. Offenders are liable to prosecution and upon conviction face a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to two years' imprisonment. Aiders and abettors are also liable to prosecution and penalties," an ImmD spokesman said.

The 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. It is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. Offenders are liable to prosecution and a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and up to 10 years' imprisonment.

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 of 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 threats 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 intervention, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

SED on early commencement of school summer holiday

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, at a media session at the Central Government Offices today (July 10):

Reporter: We have seen a surge in local coronavirus cases since Monday and some schools also reported cases in the meantime. So why did it take you a few days to come with this decision to suspend classes? And secondly, why did you decide to give some leeway to schools to decide whether they should continue with their examinations next week instead of asking them to suspend their classes mandatorily? Are you worried that there may still be a risk of transmission during these examinations? And how do you make sure that students will be able to take these examinations in a very safe manner?

Secretary for Education: We have been monitoring the situation on a daily basis. Of course we know that there has been a surge in confirmed local cases in the past few days. According to what we gathered and what measures the schools have been implementing for the safety and hygiene of the students, I think the measures are basically very effective, and so far there have not been any confirmed cases of infection in schools. So in the past few days, we think that our guidelines, our current system could cope with the occasional happening of confirmed cases. As we all know, the COVID will likely be with us for a period of time. We have to balance between the normal daily life against the spreading of the COVID. The same principle applies to education. We have to balance the safety of the students as well as the educational needs of the students. Every day we have to judge whether we need to take any extra measures for the safety of the students. In the past two days we did observe that there is another surge of confirmed local cases. And also it is now very close to the planned summer vacation anyway – we are talking about seven to 10 days. So we think that for the general good of the community as well as the health of the students, we think that we can advance the commencement of the summer vacation to next Monday. At the same time, we allow some flexibility for some important examinations to take place at the schools at the same time, such as the Primary Five Examination, the results of which will be used for the Secondary One selection process, the SSPA (Secondary School Places Allocation) exercise; and also (for) the Secondary Three and Secondary Five students, for various reasons – for preparation for the DSE (Diploma of Secondary Education) Examination and also for the selection of subjects in the coming years – the examinations seem more important. So we allow the flexibility for schools. If they have already scheduled some examinations in the coming week, we allow them to go ahead. But at the same time, we ask them to take necessary precautionary measures. The experience we gathered from holding the DSE Examination is that with sufficient precautionary measures, including wearing masks, washing hands and keeping a good distance between students, the examinations could be held safely. So we are still confident that the schools will be able to handle these examinations safely.

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