

Tour Service Coach Drivers (Mainly Serving Tourists) Support Scheme opens for applications

The Tour Service Coach Drivers (Mainly Serving Tourists) Support Scheme set up by the Government under the second round of the Anti-epidemic Fund is open for applications from today (May 6) to June 5.

The scheme will provide each tour service coach driver with a one-off subsidy of \$10,000 as financial relief to tide over the current difficult time. A maximum of about 9 300 drivers are expected to benefit from the scheme.

The application details of the scheme are available at the Tourism Commission's website (www.tourism.gov.hk).

In addition, as for other support measures for the tourism industry in the second round of the Anti-epidemic Fund, including the Travel Agents and Practitioners Support Scheme and the Hotel Sector Support Scheme, the deadlines for applications are June 15 and May 18 respectively. Application details can be found at the Tourism Commission's website.

Hong Kong Customs makes record seizure of smuggled scheduled dried shark fins (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs detected two smuggling cases of scheduled dried shark fins at the Kwai Chung Customhouse Cargo Examination Compound on April 28 and May 4. About 13 tonnes of suspected scheduled dried shark fins of endangered species were seized in each case, with an estimated market value of about \$8.6 million in total. Both cases also broke the past record of similar cases counted in a single case by weight and value.

Through risk assessment, Customs officers selected two containers arriving in Hong Kong from Ecuador for inspection and seized about 13 tonnes of suspected dried scheduled shark fins mix-loaded with non-scheduled shark fins inside each of the containers.

After follow-up investigation, Customs officers arrested a 57-year-old male suspect in Sai Ying Pun on April 29. He has been released on bail pending investigation.

Investigations of both cases are ongoing.

Under the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting an endangered species without a licence is liable to a maximum fine of \$10 million and imprisonment for 10 years.

Members of the public may report any suspected smuggling activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



LCQ7: Promoting electric vehicles

Following is a question by the Dr Hon Kwok Ka-ki and a written reply by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, in the Legislative Council today (May 6):

Question:

The Financial Secretary has indicated in this financial year's Budget Speech that the Government will update the Clean Air Plan (the Plan) to, among others, examine the policy of further promoting electric vehicles (EVs), and will formulate Hong Kong's first roadmap on the popularisation of EVs. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) regarding the official vehicles allocated to the Chief Executive and the various Secretaries of Departments and Directors of Bureaux, of their brands, models, purchase prices and numbers of service years to date, as well as the number of EVs among such vehicles (set out in a table);

(2) of the number of registered vehicles in the government fleet as at the end of March this year, and the number of EVs among such vehicles, with a tabulated breakdown by government department and type of vehicles;

(3) whether, in order to gradually increase the proportion of EVs in the fleet, it will adopt the following policy: priority being given to purchasing EVs when fuel-engined vehicles in the government fleet are due for replacement; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(4) whether it knows the numbers of (i) parking spaces and (ii) public EV chargers, together with a breakdown by type (i.e. standard, medium and quick) in each car park under the MTR Corporation Limited and the Link Asset Management Limited (set out in a table);

(5) whether it has studied, in respect of similar type of electric private cars and fuel-engined private cars achieving the same driving range, how the former's charging costs compare with the latter's fuel costs; if so, of the details; if not, whether the Government will, when updating the Plan, conduct such a study;

(6) of the international crude oil prices, final retail prices of auto-fuels in Hong Kong, and the average electricity tariff per unit respectively in each of the past 24 weeks (set out in a table); how electric private cars compare with fuel-engined private cars in terms of energy expenditure as projected on the basis of such prices;

(7) of the current number of fuel stations across the territory, and set out, by name of oil company in a table, the locations of the fuel stations and their site areas; whether the Government will require oil companies to provide charging facilities at existing fuel stations;

(8) whether it will draw up a timetable for completely phasing out fuel-engined private cars; if so, of the considerations and timetable; if not, the reasons for that;

(9) as it is learnt that the governments of certain places have, through offering economic incentives, achieved that zero-emission vehicles account for a certain proportion in the annual sales of vehicles by vehicle dealers, whether the Government will consider adopting a similar practice for vehicle dealers in Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(10) whether it will, by making reference to the pro-EV practices adopted by certain countries in terms of road use (e.g. priority road use or reduced tolls), implement pro-EV measures on the roads, tunnels and bridges connecting the New Territories with the urban areas; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(11) as it has been reported that the United Kingdom has planned to introduce green number plates for EVs to facilitate the implementation of different traffic control measures for EVs and non-EVs by the authorities, whether the Government will consider adopting such a practice; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

My responses to the various parts of the question raised by the Dr Hon Kwok Ka-ki are as follows:

(1) The models of the government vehicles allocated to the Chief Executive, Secretaries of Departments and Directors of Bureaux include BMW 750LiA, Lexus LS460L, Infiniti Q70L Hybrid and Tesla Model S 85D (electric vehicle (EV)). Among them, one is EV. As at the end of March 2020, the service year of the vehicles concerned ranges from 1.8 years to 4.2 years, while the unit purchasing price of the vehicles ranges from \$350,000 to \$720,000.

(2) As at the end of March 2020, there were a total of 6 604 vehicles in the government fleet, of which 224 were EVs. The details are set out at Annex I.

(3) As at the end of March 2020, there were 224 EVs of various models in the government fleet, which were mainly small and medium cars accounting for 9.2 per cent of the total number of government cars, higher than the overall penetration of electric private cars (e-PCs) in Hong Kong (2.2 per cent). Whether government departments can use EVs depends mainly on the development of EV technologies (including vehicle performance, durability of batteries, the highest mileage sustained after a full charge, etc. and whether these can meet the daily operational needs of the departments). Currently, the driving range of electric cars has improved generally. As regards specialised vehicles (such as refuse collection vehicles), buses, medium and heavy goods vehicles, EV models suitable for departments' operational needs are still not available in the market. For electric motorcycles, their battery performance is still unsatisfactory. For electric vans, since only few models are available for coping with uses with lower mileage and payload, they only account for about 1.6 per cent of the relevant type of government vehicles.

To support the policy of promoting wider use of EVs, the Government will keep abreast of the latest technological development of EVs and encourage departments to use EVs in replacing their retiring vehicles subject to the availability of suitable models in the market and the performance of EVs in meeting departments' operational needs.

(4) The respective number of EV chargers (including the EV chargers at the hourly and monthly parking spaces) installed at car parks managed by MTR Corporation Limited (MTRC) and Link Asset Management Limited (Link) as at the end of February 2020 are tabulated at Annex II.

(5) and (6) Regardless of whether it is an electric or fuel-propelled private car (PC), energy expenditure depends on a variety of factors, such as driving conditions, vehicle design and fuel efficiency of the vehicle, it is therefore difficult to project the expenditure for the two types of PC based on fuel prices alone and make an appropriate comparison. According to the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department's Energy Utilisation Index, using a petrol PC with engine cylinder capacity of 1 501-2 500 c.c. (i.e. the most dominant engine cylinder capacity class in Hong Kong) as an example, the fuel consumption of its internal combustion engine is about 11.6 litres per

100 km on average. Assuming a petrol price of \$17 per litre, such PC needs \$1.97 to travel one km on average. The most common e-PC model in Hong Kong consumes about 0.2 kWh per km on average. Taking an electricity tariff of \$1.3 per kWh, e-PCs need \$0.26 to travel one km on average, far lower than the cost incurred by a conventional vehicle.

The weekly average international crude oil price and retail prices of local auto-fuels in the past 24 weeks are tabulated at Annex III.

When making reference to the above data, it should be noted that crude oil and refined oil (such as unleaded petrol and motor vehicle diesel) are different products, hence changes in international crude oil price are not necessarily the same as changes in the prices of unleaded petrol and motor vehicle diesel. As for the electricity consumption of e-PCs, depending on which power company is the supplier, what kind of registered tariff account the charging facility is using, and how much electricity is consumed, the electricity tariff per unit would be different, and it is difficult to turn it into a simplified average price.

(7) Apart from the need to overcome fire and gas safety issues, the petrol filling stations (PFS) in Hong Kong are in general relatively small and the potential for adding chargers is not high. In addition, vehicles require more queuing time for electricity charging than that for petrol refilling, which will also affect nearby traffic, therefore PFS is in general not considered as suitable location to equip with chargers. We need time to process the number of PFS and related information and will provide it separately later.

(8) and (9) The Government is actively preparing to update the Clean Air Plan and formulate the roadmap on the popularisation of EVs to, among other things, further examine measures to improve air quality, as well as policy objectives and plans to promote the use of EVs, including the study on formulating the direction and roadmap to ban the sale of fuel-propelled vehicles.

The Government will actively study overseas experience in the formulation of policies and carefully examine the feasibility of applying such experiences to the local environment of Hong Kong.

(10) and (11) To promote the use of EVs, the Government has currently introduced a series of measures, including waiving in full the first registration tax (FRT) for electric commercial vehicles, electric motor cycles and electric motor tricycles, as well as offering FRT concession and "One-for-One Replacement" Scheme for e-PCs. Moreover, the annual vehicle licence fees for e-PCs are far lower than those for conventional PCs, and the electricity tariffs incurred for running e-PCs are also less expensive than the fuel charges incurred for running conventional PCs. As regards tolls for tunnels and bridges or road pricing, they are implemented based on traffic management considerations, with a view to adjusting the traffic flow and alleviating traffic congestion for the public's convenience. In line with the said rationale, the Government currently has no plan to offer concessions in tolls for tunnels and bridges or road pricing, or introduce specific traffic

management measures for EVs.

Tender for re-opening of 10-year Government Bonds under Institutional Bond Issuance Programme to be held on May 13

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA), as representative of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (HKSAR Government), announces today (May 6) that a tender of 5-year Government Bonds (Bonds) through the re-opening of existing 10-year Government Bond issue 10GB2601 under the Institutional Bond Issuance Programme will be held on May 13 (Wednesday), for settlement on May 14 (Thursday).

An additional amount of HK\$2.5 billion of the outstanding 10-year Bonds (issue no. 10GB2601) will be on offer. The Bonds will mature on January 21, 2026 and will carry interest at the rate of 1.68 per cent per annum payable semi-annually in arrears. The Indicative Pricings of the Bonds on May 6 is 107.22 with an annualised yield of 0.402 per cent.

Under the Institutional Bond Issuance Programme, tender is open only to Recognized Dealers which are appointed as Primary Dealers. Anyone wishing to apply for the Bonds on offer can do so through any of the Primary Dealers on the current published list, which can be obtained from the Government Bond Programme's website at www.hkgb.gov.hk. Each tender must be for an amount of HK\$50,000 or integral multiples thereof.

Tender results will be published on the HKMA's website, the Government Bond Programme's website, the Reuters screen (HKGBINDEX), and Bloomberg (GBHK <GO>) not later than 3pm on the tender day.

HKSAR Government Institutional Bond Issuance Programme Tender Information

Tender information of re-opening of 10-year Government Bonds under the Institutional Bond Issuance Programme:

Issue Number	:	10GB2601 (Re-open)
Stock code	:	4230 (HKGB 1.68 2601)

Tender Date and Time : May 13, 2020 (Wednesday)
9.30am to 10.30am

Issue and Settlement
Date for tender amount : May 14, 2020 (Thursday)

Amount on Offer : HK\$2.5 billion

Maturity : 10 years

Remaining Maturity : Approximately 5.69 years

Maturity Date : January 21, 2026

Interest Rate : 1.68 per cent p.a. payable semi-annually in
arrears

Interest Payment
Dates : July 21, 2020
January 21, 2021
July 21, 2021
January 21, 2022
July 21, 2022
January 25, 2023
July 21, 2023
January 22, 2024
July 22, 2024
January 21, 2025
July 21, 2025
January 21, 2026

Method of Tender : Competitive tender

Each competitive tender must be for an amount of HK\$50,000 or integral multiples thereof. Any tender applications for the Bonds must be submitted through a Primary Dealer on the current published list.

Tender Amount : The accrued interest to be paid by successful bidders on the issue date (May 14, 2020) for the tender amount is HK\$262.36 per minimum denomination of HK\$50,000.

(The accrued interest to be paid for tender amount exceeding HK\$50,000 may not be exactly equal to the figures calculated from the accrued interest per minimum denomination of HK\$50,000 due to rounding).

Other details : Please see Information Memorandum available on the Government Bond Programme's website at www.hkgb.gov.hk or approach Primary Dealers.

Expected commencement date of dealing on the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong Limited : The tender amount is fully fungible with the existing 10GB2601 (Stock code: 4230) listed on the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong.

Price/Yield Table of the re-opening Government Bonds at tender for reference* only:

Yield-to-Maturity	Price	Yield-to-Maturity	Price
-0.598	113.21	0.402	107.18
-0.548	112.90	0.452	106.89
-0.498	112.59	0.502	106.60
-0.448	112.28	0.552	106.31
-0.398	111.97	0.602	106.02
-0.348	111.66	0.652	105.74
-0.298	111.36	0.702	105.45
-0.248	111.05	0.752	105.17
-0.198	110.75	0.802	104.88
-0.148	110.45	0.852	104.60
-0.098	110.14	0.902	104.31
-0.048	109.84	0.952	104.03
0.002	109.54	1.002	103.75
0.052	109.24	1.052	103.47
0.102	108.95	1.102	103.19
0.152	108.65	1.152	102.92
0.202	108.35	1.202	102.64
0.252	108.06	1.252	102.36
0.302	107.77	1.302	102.09
0.352	107.47	1.352	101.81
0.402	107.18	1.402	101.54

* Disclaimer

The information provided here is for reference only. Although extreme care has been taken to ensure that the information provided is accurate and up-to-date, the HKMA does not warrant that all, or any part of, the information provided is accurate in all respects. You are encouraged to conduct your own enquiries to verify any particular piece of information provided on it. The HKMA shall not be liable for any loss or damage suffered as a result of any use or reliance on any of the information provided here.

Woman fined for operating unlicensed guesthouse

A woman was fined \$6,000 at the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts today (May 6) for contravening the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance.

The courts heard that in August last year, officers of the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA), Home Affairs Department, inspected a suspected unlicensed guesthouse on Bowring Street in Jordan. During the inspection, the OLA officers posed as lodgers and successfully rented a room in the guesthouse on a daily basis.

According to the OLA's records, the guesthouse did not possess a licence under the Ordinance on the day of inspection. The woman responsible for operating the premises was charged with contravening section 5(1) of the Ordinance.

A department spokesman stressed that operating or managing an unlicensed guesthouse is a criminal offence and can lead to a criminal record. Upon conviction, the offender is liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and two years' imprisonment.

The spokesman appealed to anyone with information about suspected unlicensed guesthouses to report it to the OLA through the hotline (Tel: 2881 7498), by email (hadlaenq@had.gov.hk), by fax (2504 5805) using the report form downloaded from the OLA website (www.hadla.gov.hk), or through the mobile application "Hong Kong Licensed Hotels and Guesthouses".