

# Guangdong/Hong Kong Expert Group on Protection of Intellectual Property Rights takes forward co-operation projects for 2020

The Guangdong/Hong Kong Expert Group on the Protection of Intellectual Property Rights endorsed the co-operation projects for 2020 today (April 24). The Expert Group agreed to further strengthen co-operation, enhance the level of co-operation, expand the realm of co-operation, continue to promote the development of intellectual property (IP) trading and high-end service industries, foster regional innovation, and promote the further development of IP co-operation between Guangdong and Hong Kong through embracing the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area development.

Co-operation projects of the Expert Group for 2020 cover the following six areas:

- \* Strengthening co-operation on IP in the Greater Bay Area;
- \* Reinforcing co-operation on protection of IP in both places;
- \* Promoting co-operation on IP trading in both places;
- \* Promoting exchange and deliberation on IP in both places;
- \* Strengthening guidance service on IP in both places; and
- \* Organising IP promotion and education activities in both places.

Key co-operation projects include continuing to promote the development of IP trading in both places so as to enhance the commercialisation and exploitation of scientific research achievements; continuing to promote settlement of IP disputes by arbitration or mediation; and organising the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area High Value Patent Portfolio Contest 2020 as well as exchange activities concerning IP litigation and judicial protection, trademarks and copyright and other related areas.

On cross-border protection of IP, Customs authorities of both places this year will continue to focus on combating infringing goods destined for Hong Kong or for the Belt and Road countries through Hong Kong. The two sides will mount other joint enforcement operations in a timely manner according to changing situations.

Looking back at the past year, members of the Expert Group forged closer co-operation and implemented a total of 27 co-operation projects, actively promoting regional IP development. With respect to promoting IP co-operation in the Greater Bay Area, the Expert Group proactively explored the co-operation opportunities in the Greater Bay Area through organising a wide array of activities, including the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area High Value Patent Portfolio Contest 2019, the Intellectual Property Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area & the Belt and

Road Forum, a seminar themed "Brand Development of Classic Old Shops/Time-honoured Brands: Rebranding", exchange activities in relation to arbitration and mediation, and production of short promotional videos about IP commercialisation in the Greater Bay Area.

Other collaboration projects include organising the Guangdong/Hong Kong Seminar on IP and Development of Small and Medium Enterprises; continuing to support the Business of IP Asia Forum co-organised by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and the Hong Kong Design Centre; and organising exchange programmes relating to IP protection, exploitation and trading, including exchange activities relating to trademark examination and enforcement.

As for cross-border protection of IP, law enforcement authorities in Guangdong and Hong Kong combated cross-border infringing activities through various co-operation mechanisms, including intelligence exchange, sharing of information resources, joint operations and project co-operation.

The Expert Group was set up after the Sixth Plenary of the Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation Joint Conference in August 2003. It aims at enhancing exchanges and co-operation in various aspects of IP protection, including promotion and education, training, enforcement, research study and information dissemination.

The leader of the Expert Group from the Guangdong side is the Director-General of the Guangdong Administration for Market Regulation (Guangdong Intellectual Property Administration), and members include officials from the Guangdong Administration for Market Regulation (Guangdong Intellectual Property Administration), the Guangdong Copyright Administration Bureau, the Guangdong Provincial Public Security Department, the Department of Commerce of Guangdong Province and the Guangdong Sub-administration of Customs General Administration. The leader of the Expert Group from the Hong Kong side is the Director of Intellectual Property, and members include officials from the Intellectual Property Department, the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and the Customs and Excise Department.

A summary of the co-operation items has been uploaded to the website of the Intellectual Property Department ([www.ipd.gov.hk/eng/ip\\_cooperation\\_corner/meeting.htm](http://www.ipd.gov.hk/eng/ip_cooperation_corner/meeting.htm)).

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## **Review of Statutory Minimum Wage rate**

The following is issued on behalf of the Minimum Wage Commission:

The Minimum Wage Commission (MWC) will submit to the Chief Executive (CE) in Council its recommendation report on the Statutory Minimum Wage (SMW)

rate by the end of October 2020 at the latest.

In accordance with the Minimum Wage Ordinance (MWO) (Cap. 608), the CE has required the MWC to submit its recommendation report on the SMW rate on or before October 31, 2020. Pursuant to the MWO, in performing its functions, the MWC must have regard to the need to maintain an appropriate balance between the objectives of forestalling excessively low wages and minimising the loss of low-paid jobs, and the need to sustain Hong Kong's economic growth and competitiveness.

The MWC adopts an evidence-based approach in reviewing the SMW rate. Apart from research and analysis of relevant statistical data, the MWC is conducting public consultation and the community is welcome to provide their views on the review of the SMW rate in writing by e-Form ([www.mwc.org.hk/en/consultation/index.html](http://www.mwc.org.hk/en/consultation/index.html)) on the MWC's website, by fax (2110 3518), by email ([mwc@labour.gov.hk](mailto:mwc@labour.gov.hk)) or by post (Minimum Wage Commission, 1/F, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central) on or before June 16, 2020. The public can also contact the Secretariat of the MWC at 2852 3864.

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## **List of environmental impact assessments in first quarter of 2020 released**

The Environmental Protection Department today (April 24) released a list of completed and newly commenced statutory environmental impact assessments (EIAs) and non-statutory environmental studies for major development projects between January 1 and March 31, 2020.

Updated information related to the EIA Ordinance is available on the EIA Ordinance website at [www.epd.gov.hk/eia](http://www.epd.gov.hk/eia).

Completed statutory EIAs and non-statutory environmental studies for projects in the first quarter of 2020 include:

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### **A. Statutory EIAs:**

Nil

### **B. Non-statutory environmental studies for projects:**

Nil

Newly commenced statutory EIAs and non-statutory environmental studies for projects include:

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A. Statutory EIAs:

1. New Contaminated Sediment Disposal Facility to the West of Lamma Island (EIA Study Brief No. ESB-328/2019)  
(Civil Engineering and Development Department)

B. Non-statutory environmental studies for projects:

Nil

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## Applications invited for 42nd Personalised Vehicle Registration Marks exercise

The Transport Department (TD) today (April 24) announced that the 42nd invitation exercise of the Personalised Vehicle Registration Marks (PVRMs) Scheme will be launched on May 1.

"Starting from May 1, applications are invited under the 42nd invitation exercise for the allocation of PVRMs upon sale by auction. Completed application forms should reach the department no later than May 31. If there are more than 1 500 applications, those to be considered will be selected by lot," a TD spokesman said.

The application form (TD 569) and the Guidance Notes for Application can be downloaded from the TD's website ([www.td.gov.hk](http://www.td.gov.hk)) or obtained from the TD's Licensing Offices as well as the Public Enquiry Service Centres of the Home Affairs Department.

Interested persons should complete and submit the application form through one of the following ways:

(a) By post to the Vehicle Registration Marks Unit, Transport Department, 12/F, South Tower, West Kowloon Government Offices, 11 Hoi Ting Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon. Applications received by post will be dated by the postmark;

(b) Via the drop-in box at any of the TD's Licensing Offices at Admiralty, Cheung Sha Wan, Kwun Tong and Sha Tin between 9am and 5pm from Monday to Friday (except public holidays). Applications submitted via the drop-in boxes should be handed in no later than 5pm on May 29 (Friday). For easy

identification, please mark "PVRM Application" on the envelope of the application. Applicants are advised to visit the TD's website for the latest service arrangements of the Licensing Offices; or

(c) Through the online application service at the GovHK website ([www.gov.hk/en/residents/transport/vehicle/ospvrm.htm](http://www.gov.hk/en/residents/transport/vehicle/ospvrm.htm)) if the applicant possesses a digital certificate.

Applicants are advised to read carefully the Guidance Notes for details of the scheme before completing the application form. They can also check whether a proposed PVRM is in compliance with the basic combination requirements by using the online service at the GovHK website.

No payment of a deposit is required when submitting an application. Each applicant can submit only one application in each exercise. If an applicant submits more than one application, none of his or her applications will be processed. Once submitted, the applicant cannot withdraw the application or change the arrangement of the PVRM stated in the application form.

An acknowledgement will immediately be sent to the applicant upon successful submission of an online application. Those who submit applications by TD 569 will receive the TD's acknowledgement by ordinary post within two weeks after submission. Applicants who do not receive the acknowledgement within this time frame should call the TD hotline at 2804 2600.

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## **Hong Kong Monetary Authority launches dedicated email account and enquiry hotline on Pre-approved Principal Payment Holiday Scheme for corporate customers**

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) launched today (April 24) a dedicated email account ([ppphs@hkma.gov.hk](mailto:ppphs@hkma.gov.hk)) and enquiry hotline (2878 1199) to receive comments and answer queries regarding the Pre-approved Principal Payment Holiday Scheme for corporate customers.

The Chief Executive of the HKMA, Mr Eddie Yue, said, "Considering the novel nature of the Scheme, the HKMA launches a dedicated email account and enquiry hotline to assist corporates and other stakeholders to raise enquiries and share their feedback related to the Scheme. This will help us

monitor the operation of the Scheme and improve its implementation. Details are also posted on our dedicated webpage of 'Together, We Fight the Virus!'. We welcome your comments which can be shared with the HKMA through the dedicated email account and hotline."

In light of the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 outbreak to the economy and operations of corporates, the HKMA together with the Banking Sector SME Lending Coordination Mechanism previously announced the launch of a Pre-approved Principal Payment Holiday Scheme for eligible corporate customers. Under the Scheme, all loan principal payments of eligible customers falling due within a 6-month period between May 1, 2020 and October 31, 2020 will be pre-approved for deferment. Principal payments of loans (including revolving facilities) will generally be deferred by 6 months, whereas trade facilities, given their short-term nature, will be deferred by 3 months. Eligible customers do not need to apply for the Scheme. They only need to contact the bank within 14 days of the bank's notice to confirm the detailed arrangements of the principal payment holiday. The HKMA expects that the Scheme will cover more than 80 per cent of all corporate borrowers in Hong Kong, which can help to alleviate the cash-flow pressure faced by corporate customers.