

BFAC holds 46th meeting

The following is issued on behalf of the Business Facilitation Advisory Committee Secretariat:

The Business Facilitation Advisory Committee held its 46th meeting today (September 20).

At the meeting, members were briefed by the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau on the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) and key areas of work of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government. The development of the GBA is a key development strategy in the country's reform and opening up in the new era. It has great significance in the country's implementation of innovation-driven development and commitment to reform and opening up, and is a further step in taking forward the implementation of "one country, two systems". The HKSAR will continue to proactively integrate into the overall national development to bring new development opportunities to different sectors of the community.

The Committee also received the work reports of its three task forces:

Wholesale and Retail Task Force (WRTF)

- The Fire Services Department (FSD) briefed the WRTF on promoting wider use of stand-alone fire detectors to enhance building fire safety. The FSD proposed to amend the relevant fire service regulation to exempt owners/occupants of any building/premises, who installed stand-alone fire detectors upon their own volition, from relevant statutory duties. This will assist and encourage members of the public on the selection and installation of appropriate stand-alone fire detectors. The WRTF welcomed the proposal and appreciated the FSD's commitment to formulating fire safety policy for better protection of life and property of the community.
- The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department briefed the WRTF on the implementation of the Food Trader Portal (FTP). The FTP is a one-stop electronic platform for communication between the CFS and food traders that aims at strengthening the CFS' capability in food import control, streamlining workflows and assisting the trade through the use of information technology. The WRTF welcomed the implementation of the FTP and appreciated the CFS' efforts in strengthening food safety control and traceability.

Food Business and Related Services Task Force (FRSTF)

- The FSD briefed the FRSTF on the revised Requirements for Self-contained Luminaires Emergency Lighting Systems for catering premises which will be implemented on June 1, 2022. The FRSTF appreciated the FSD's elaboration of the key requirements prior to implementation to facilitate the trade's understanding and compliance.
- The Labour Department (LD) briefed the FRSTF on the laws and requirements related to occupational safety and health that are applicable to catering premises. The FRSTF thanked the LD for the briefing and suggested enhancing the publicity on the statutory requirements, streamlining the procedures for submitting notification of workplaces and digitising the notification records to facilitate the trade's compliance and searching for records.
- The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) briefed the FRSTF on the consultation paper on the Scheme on Regulation of Disposable Plastic Tableware. The scheme proposed phased implementation to ban the provision of disposable plastic tableware by catering premises. The FRSTF thanked the EPD for the briefing and appreciated the department's effort in listening to and addressing the trade's concerns.

Task Force on Business Liaison Groups (BLGTF)

- The Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA) of the Home Affairs Department briefed the BLGTF on its latest business facilitation initiatives including e- services and measures to improve the guidance and support for licensing of hotels, guesthouses, clubhouses, karaoke establishments and entertainment trades. The BLGTF thanked the OLA for the initiatives, which would ease trades' compliance burden by making licence application services more business-friendly and transparent.
- The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) briefed the BLGTF on e-licensing and other business facilitation measures for billiard establishments, public bowling alleys and public skating rinks. The BLGTF thanked the LCSD for implementing the measures, which would streamline the licence application process and save the trades' time and administrative efforts.
- The FSD briefed the BLGTF on the revised fire safety requirements for emergency lighting systems in licensed/registered premises. The BLGTF welcomed the relevant updates, which would facilitate business by ensuring the reliability of the emergency lighting systems and enhancing the fire safety of the premises concerned.

The Committee also expressed appreciation for the commitment and achievements of the bureaux and departments in continuously enhancing their business licensing services under the "Be the Smart Regulator" Programme.

Papers for the Committee meeting are available at www.gov.hk/en/business/supportenterprises/bf/advisory/index.htm for public access.