

# Highways Department's Emergency Control Centre drill to enhance capability to cope with inclement weather (with photos)

The Emergency Control Centres (ECCs) of the Highways Department (HyD) today (March 17) conducted a drill with the road maintenance contractors to simulate the inspection of major roads in the territory and the handling of road emergencies during typhoons. This could enable HyD staff members and contractors to familiarise themselves with the relevant work procedures and points to note in emergency recovery works of road facilities before the typhoon and rainy season.

The HyD will activate its four ECCs serving the Urban Region, New Territories, Cross Boundary, and Tsing Ma and Tsing Sha Control Areas respectively, with HyD staff on duty and road maintenance contractors providing frontline support during inclement weather such as typhoons or rainstorms. The ECCs serve to monitor the latest conditions of major public roads in real time and handle road emergencies when necessary, including promptly clearing obstructions on roads and blocked road gullies and drains, reinforcing collapsed slopes with emergency shotcrete, etc with a view to resuming road traffic of major public roads as soon as possible. The ECCs will also liaise closely with other departments and disseminate information on the latest situation of road blockages and emergency follow-up actions, etc to the departments concerned, so as to provide support to the Government in handling emergency incidents in a comprehensive manner.

Apart from conducting the drill, the HyD has been implementing a series of preventive measures on an ongoing basis to enhance its capability in coping with inclement weather. The measures include:

- (i) instructing the contractors to inspect in advance the roads and structures with a higher risk of flooding and the pumping facilities in road tunnels or pedestrian subways under its purview, and stepping up the inspection and clearance works of the gullies and drains of public roads in collaboration with the relevant departments, especially those with a higher risk of flooding;
- (ii) conducting annual routine maintenance inspections of roadside slopes, and carrying out protective maintenance and stabilisation works for slopes with higher risks and retaining walls;
- (iii) conducting regular vegetation maintenance operations for its roadside slopes and expressways such as pruning overgrown vegetation and problematic trees; and
- (iv) completing the tree risk assessments and the corresponding mitigation

measures before the onset of the typhoon and rainy season, while promptly following up or removing trees on roadside with immediate danger or those that have collapsed.

In addition, the HyD will install flood warning systems for some pedestrian subways along Shing Mun River in Sha Tin, Lam Tsuen River in Tai Po and Tai Po River in phases from 2024 to 2025, and explore with the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department to install closed-circuit television systems at pedestrian subways in low-lying areas with a higher flooding risk so as to further enhance the monitoring.



