

Interdepartmental working group on festival arrangements releases latest information on cross-boundary passenger traffic estimation and arrangements for Tuen Ng Festival long weekend of the Mainland

The interdepartmental working group on festival arrangements, led by the Chief Secretary for Administration, released the following information today (May 29) on the latest situation and arrangements for the upcoming Tuen Ng Festival long weekend of the Mainland.

During the upcoming Tuen Ng Festival long weekend of the Mainland (May 31 to June 2), the Immigration Department (ImmD) estimates that around 3.2 million passengers (including Hong Kong residents and visitors) will pass through Hong Kong's sea, land and air control points. The ImmD, in consultation with the Shenzhen General Station of Exit and Entry Frontier Inspection and other Mainland authorities, estimates that around 2.73 million passengers will pass through land boundary control points. The number of outbound and inbound passengers using land boundary control points will be relatively higher on May 31 (Saturday) and June 1 (Sunday), with around 570 000 passengers and 540 000 passengers respectively.

The ImmD estimates that the passenger traffic at the Lo Wu Control Point, the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line Control Point and the Shenzhen Bay Control Point will be heavy, with a daily average forecast of about 230 000, 200 000 and 140 000 passengers respectively.

To cope with the anticipated heavy traffic during the festive period, the ImmD has minimised leave for frontline officers for flexible deployment and the operation of extra clearance counters and kiosks.

Furthermore, the ImmD, the Hong Kong Police Force, the Customs and Excise Department and the MTR Corporation Limited will set up a joint command centre at the Lo Wu Control Point to make necessary arrangements. The ImmD will also establish close communication with Mainland authorities, including the Shenzhen General Station of Exit and Entry Frontier Inspection. To ensure a smooth passenger traffic flow, passenger conditions will be closely monitored and appropriate traffic diversion plans will be adopted when necessary.

To avoid congestion and longer-than-usual waiting times for immigration clearance, the ImmD advises all land boundary passengers to plan in advance, avoid making their journeys during busy periods, and keep track of radio and

TV broadcasts on traffic conditions at various control points. Furthermore, passengers may also check the estimated waiting times at each land boundary control point at any time or place via the Immigration Mobile Application (ImmD Mobile App). They can then plan their trips effectively and save time queuing at control points. The ImmD Mobile App can be downloaded free of charge from the Apple App Store (supports iOS version 12.0 or above), Google Play (supports Android version 8.0 or above), Huawei AppGallery (supports Android version 8.0 or above) and the APK file available on the ImmD website. Passengers can download the ImmD Mobile App by scanning the QR code (see Annex) or via the ImmD website, www.immd.gov.hk. In addition, information on public transport services to and from various control points is available on the Transport Department website at www.td.gov.hk.

For travellers making journeys to the Mainland, the ImmD reminds them to carry their proof of identity and valid travel documents for crossing the boundary. Hong Kong residents should also check the validity of their Home Visit Permits. Non-permanent residents must carry their valid smart identity card as well as their Document of Identity for Visa Purposes or valid travel document.

Holders of the acknowledgement receipt issued due to the reported loss or replacement of their Hong Kong identity cards, or children under 11 years old who hold Hong Kong identity cards, should carry a valid travel document or Re-entry Permit.

About 700 e-Channels have been installed at various control points. To further enhance the clearance efficiency of control points and allow more Hong Kong residents to use the fast and convenient e-Channel service, starting from March 31, the ImmD has adjusted the applicable age for e-Channel service for holders of smart identity cards. Eligible Hong Kong permanent residents aged 7 to 10 years old, who are at least 1.1 metres tall and hold a smart identity card and a valid Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Passport, can use the e-Channels without prior enrolment for self-service immigration clearance via face recognition technology at all control points. Moreover, the Contactless e-Channel service is available at all control points now. All eligible Hong Kong residents, after enrolment, can generate an encrypted QR code through the Contactless e-Channel mobile application to enter the e-Channel and then verify their identity with the facial verification technology for automated immigration clearance.

In addition, all control points have introduced self-service departures for visitors to Hong Kong (Smart Departure), which provides greater travel convenience for visitors. The service employs facial recognition technology for identity verification, which allows eligible visitors holding electronic travel documents to perform self-service departure clearance through Smart Departure e-Channels without prior enrolment.

Hong Kong residents who require assistance while travelling outside Hong Kong may call the 24-hour hotline of the Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit of the ImmD at (852) 1868, call the 1868 hotline using network data or use the 1868 Chatbot via the ImmD Mobile App, send a message to 1868 WhatsApp

assistance hotline or 1868 WeChat assistance hotline or submit the Online Assistance Request Form.

The interdepartmental working group on festival arrangements is tasked with holistically co-ordinating and steering the preparatory work of various government departments for welcoming visitors to Hong Kong during the Tuen Ng Festival long weekend of the Mainland, as well as strengthening information dissemination to enable the public and visitors to plan their itineraries according to the latest situation.