

LCQ4: Return2hk Scheme

Following is a question by the Hon Kwok Wai-keung and a written reply by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai, in the Legislative Council today (January 20):

Question:

Under the "Return2hk – Travel Scheme for Hong Kong Residents returning from Guangdong Province or Macao without being subject to quarantine under the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C)" (Return2hk Scheme), Hong Kong residents, upon fulfilment of specified conditions, will be exempted from the 14-day compulsory quarantine when returning to Hong Kong from Guangdong Province or Macao. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the total and daily average numbers of Hong Kong residents returning to Hong Kong under the Return2hk Scheme since its implementation on November 23 last year;

(2) given that from February to November last year, about 2 000 person-times of Hong Kong residents in Fujian Province benefited from the "special scheme to deliver prescription medications to Hong Kong residents who are currently in Guangdong and Fujian Provinces with urgent need for medications", whether the Government will extend the scope of application of the Return2hk Scheme to those Hong Kong residents who are in Fujian Province; and

(3) as the epidemic is under control in most provinces and municipalities on the Mainland, whether the Government will extend the scope of application of the Return2hk Scheme to those Hong Kong residents who are in such places?

Reply:

President,

Upon consulting the Food and Health Bureau, our reply to the question raised by the Hon Kwok Wai-keung is as follows:

(1) Since the implementation of the "Return2hk – Travel Scheme for Hong Kong Residents returning from Guangdong Province or Macao without being subject to quarantine under the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C)" (the Scheme) on November 23, 2020 until January 18, 2021, a total of 32 025 persons (about 560 persons per day on average) have returned to Hong Kong under the Scheme.

(2) & (3) Having considered the epidemic-control situation in Guangdong Province and Macao, the Secretary for Food and Health has specified Guangdong Province and Macao as Category 2 specified places in China with effect from November 23, 2020 and relevant conditions pursuant to the Compulsory

Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C), thereby allowing Hong Kong residents who are located in Guangdong Province and Macao to be exempted from the 14-day compulsory quarantine requirement when they return to Hong Kong, upon fulfilment of the specified conditions under the Scheme.

The Scheme is the first step forward in the resumption of normal cross-boundary flow of people amongst Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao in a gradual and orderly manner. Since the launch of the Scheme, the HKSAR Government has continually reviewed the implementation of the Scheme, closely monitored the epidemic situation in Hong Kong, the Mainland and Macao, and maintained close liaison with the Mainland and Macao authorities to explore together the next step forward.

Having regard to the overall situation at present, the HKSAR Government considers that it is not an appropriate juncture to expand the scope of the Scheme now. The HKSAR Government will continue to closely monitor the epidemic situation in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao, as well as other relevant factors, and will make announcement at a suitable juncture if there is any adjustment to the scope of the Scheme.