

## Marine Department and Hong Kong Police Force mount publicity campaign to promote Marine Safety (Alcohol and Drugs) Ordinance (with photos)

To raise public awareness on drink and drug boating, the Marine Department (MD) and the Hong Kong Police Force (Marine Police) today (December 27) mounted a publicity campaign at Central Pier Nos. 9 and 10 to distribute publicity leaflets on the Marine Safety (Alcohol and Drugs) Ordinance (the Ordinance) to the public. This new legislation will be implemented on January 1, 2025, with a view to regulating drink and drug boating in Hong Kong waters, enhance marine safety and protect the safety of persons on board a vessel.

A spokesman for the MD said, "The Ordinance will empower the MD and the Hong Kong Police Force to conduct compulsory approved tests on a person involved in operating a vessel or performing designated duties on board a vessel that is under way for alcohol or drugs after the occurrence of an accident, when the person is suspected of having committed a marine traffic offence. Such tests could also be administered during spot checks on vessels."

According to the Ordinance, any person involved in operating a vessel, including those who control, navigate or pilot a vessel, or perform designated duties, i.e. relating to the safety and the security of the vessel and the protection of the marine environment on board a vessel that is under way, will commit an offence if the person is under the influence of alcohol or drugs to the extent of being incapable of having proper control of the vessel or performing designated duties properly, or has alcohol exceeding the prescribed limits in the person's body, or has any specified illicit drugs in the person's body. Upon conviction, the maximum penalty is a fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for three years as well as disqualification of relevant qualifications for life.

While the MD and Marine Police will continue to make use of various publicity channels to remind the public, persons-in-charge and relevant persons of vessels of the implementation of the Ordinance, the MD has also launched a series of publicity activities including production of publicity materials such as leaflets, posters and banners; organisation of briefings for maritime industry members and stakeholders; production and broadcasting of a TV Announcement in the Public Interest (API) and a radio API to assist members of the public to better understand the contents of the Ordinance. The public are welcome to browse the MD's website ([www.mardep.gov.hk/en/materials-and-publications/publicity-materials/index-id-42.html](http://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/materials-and-publications/publicity-materials/index-id-42.html)) for details.

