

SCS on oath-taking by civil servants

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Patrick Nip, at a media session in the Legislative Council Complex today (September 25):

Reporter: The civil servants ... (inaudible)? Are they breaching the national security law? So what are the penalties like? Does it also apply to current civil servants?

Secretary for the Civil Service: The requirement for civil servants to take an oath or make a written declaration is basically a manifestation of their established responsibilities. So there is nothing new. These responsibilities are set out in the Basic Law Article 99 and the Civil Service Code. It is also consistent with the national security law, particularly Article 6. So we introduce this requirement, we hope that through this requirement there could be a manifestation of the civil service's responsibility to uphold the Basic Law and pledge allegiance to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and also enable colleagues to be more aware of this responsibility. We are now setting out the arrangements. Basically for those new recruits joining the Government on or after July 1 this year, we would make arrangement for them to make a written declaration, and this will be part of the conditions for their employment.

For serving civil servants, we are following the established mechanism and in the process of consulting the major civil service staff unions and also our colleagues. And we would take into account all the comments, feedback received and then finalise the arrangements and make the promulgation when we are in a position to do so.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)