

Traffic enforcement operation against illegal parking in Sham Shui Po District (with photo)

Sham Shui Po Police District launched a traffic enforcement operation against illegal parking in Sham Shui Po and Cheung Sha Wan area today (January 20), with a view to ensuring road safety and smooth traffic flow.

Stringent enforcement action will be taken during the operation which last until January 24. The Police will issue fixed penalty tickets to drivers who park their vehicles illegally, particularly those involve double parking, at restricted zones (especially near bus stops), and obstructing vehicle entrances.

The Police will issue multiple tickets and take summons action against drivers who have contravened illegal parking regulations, obstructed traffic flow or caused danger to other road users. Illegally parked vehicles will also be towed away if necessary.

During the first day of the Chinese Lunar New Year to the third day of the Chinese Lunar New Year, stringent enforcement action will be continued. Drivers are encouraged to be responsible and safe, and respect the rights of other road users.



HA endorsed Corporate Plan and Budget for 2020-21

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Housing Authority:

At the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) meeting today (January 20), the HA endorsed the Corporate Plan for 2020-21, the 2019-20 Revised Budget and

the 2020-21 Proposed Budget, and also noted the Financial Forecasts for 2021-22 to 2023-24.

In 2020-21, the HA will continue to focus its efforts on providing quality homes, promoting sustainable living, optimising and rationalising the use of public resources and enhancing the attractiveness of its commercial properties. Based on these four themes, a total of 52 key activities and 19 key performance indicators have been drawn up for the 2020-21 Corporate Plan.

"The Corporate Plan is the platform through which the HA directs its work and focuses its efforts to address the challenges of public housing. In 2020-21, the HA will continue to invite the Government to provide suitable sites for developing both public rental housing (PRH) units and subsidised sale flats with a view to increasing the supply of public housing units. Having regard to the housing policy initiatives in the 2019 Policy Address, the HA will explore the feasibility of redeveloping its factory estates for public housing, consider making active preparations with a view to accelerating the sale of the about 42 000 unsold flats in the 39 estates under the Tenants Purchase Scheme, consider putting up as many as 12 000 Home Ownership Scheme and Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme flats for sale in 2020 and consider further raising the quota of the White Form Secondary Market Scheme in 2020," a spokesman for the HA said.

"Furthermore, on development and construction of public housing, the HA will continue to review and enhance the quality management system and specifications for all critical site works and installations for new capital works projects and explore possible enhancements to the buildability and productivity of public housing developments. On estate management, the HA will continue to enhance safety, environmental hygiene, greening and landscape, as well as community bonding in PRH estates. On corporate management, the HA will continue to make the best use of human resources to meet the corporate goals and enhance its corporate image," the spokesman added.

Furthermore, on the basis of current forecasts, with the projected increase in the number of public housing projects in the coming years, the construction expenditure and operating expenditure are expected to continue to go up. As the increased expenditure will be partly offset by the subsidised sale flat receipts, the cash and investment balance of the HA is projected to decrease from about \$43 billion at the beginning of April 2019 to about \$35 billion by the end of March 2024. It is also projected that the HA will still have the necessary financial resources to meet its recurrent expenditure and implement its current public housing construction programme and maintenance programme during the budget and forecast period.

"If and when there are changes to any of the budget assumptions, the projected financial position will vary. According to the existing mechanism, the HA will conduct an annual rolling five-year budgeting exercise and assess its financial position and future funding requirements. The Government has earmarked \$82.4 billion (the balance of the previous Housing Reserve) in the fiscal reserves for the development of public housing and related

infrastructure, which is a good demonstration of the Government's firm commitment in this regard," the spokesman said.

The HA's 2020-21 Corporate Plan and the budgets will be submitted to the Chief Executive for approval. The Financial Forecasts will also be made available to the Chief Executive for her information.

SCS visits Audit Commission

The Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Joshua Law, visited the Audit Commission today (January 20) to meet with its management and staff of various grades to learn more about their work and matters of concern.

Accompanied by the Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Thomas Chow, Mr Law first met with the Director of Audit, Mr John Chu, and the directorate staff to receive an update on the department's work in conducting regularity audits on government departments and other public sector organisations as well as value for money audits and the challenges confronting them.

Mr Law then proceeded to the Value for Money Audit Divisions to better understand their work in conducting value for money audits on the performance of audited organisations to ensure that the functions of these organisations are discharged economically, efficiently and effectively, with reports submitted to the Legislative Council twice a year.

At the Regularity Audit Division, Mr Law was briefed on the division's work in conducting regularity audits which provide the Legislative Council with an overall assurance that the Government's financial and accounting transactions and those of funds of a public or quasi-public nature are proper and that they conform to accepted accounting standards.

Before concluding his visit, Mr Law met with staff representatives of various grades in the department at a tea gathering to exchange views on matters of concern. He praised colleagues for their efforts and encouraged them to carry on the fine tradition of the department in providing independent, professional and quality audit services.

Public hospital daily update on Wuhan-

related cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (January 20), public hospitals had reported to the Department of Health (DH) the admission of seven patients (two male and five female, aged 1 to 67) in the past 24 hours who met the reporting criteria.

Specimens of the patients concerned have been sent to the DH for testing. Currently, there are 20 patients still under isolation, 18 patients are in stable condition, while two patients in North District Hospital are in critical condition and serious condition respectively due to their underlying diseases.

There are currently no patients confirmed as being infected with novel coronavirus in public hospitals.

The spokesperson for the Hospital Authority (HA) reminded that restricted visiting arrangements are now imposed in all public hospitals. "Members of the public are advised to avoid visiting patients in wards if they have a fever, or have had close contact with patients with respiratory symptoms in countries/areas with possible transmissions of novel coronavirus infection."

Visitors of public hospitals are also required to wear masks in all clinical areas and to wash hands before and after visiting hospitals.

The HA will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected cocaine (with photo)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs yesterday (January 19) seized about 3 kilograms of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$3.1 million at Hong Kong International Airport.

A 28-year-old male passenger arrived in Hong Kong from Kuala Lumpur yesterday. During customs clearance, the batch of suspected cocaine was found concealed inside the false compartments of his backpack. The man was then arrested.

Investigation is ongoing.

Customs will continue to apply a risk assessment approach and focus on selecting passengers from high-risk regions for clearance. The department will also further step up enforcement actions before Lunar New Year with a view to combating transnational drug trafficking activities effectively.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

