

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected illicit cigarettes \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs seized about 1.1 million suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$3 million and a duty potential of about \$2.1 million at Man Kam To Control Point on January 14.

Customs officers intercepted an incoming truck declared as carrying assorted goods at Man Kam To Control Point on January 14. After inspection, Customs officers found the batch of suspected illicit cigarettes in four wooden crates mix-loaded with other goods on board the truck.

The 48-year-old male driver was arrested and the truck was detained. Investigation is ongoing.

Smuggling is a serious offence. Under the Import and Export Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting unmanifested cargo is liable to a maximum fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years.

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



[Senior appointment \(with photo\)](#)

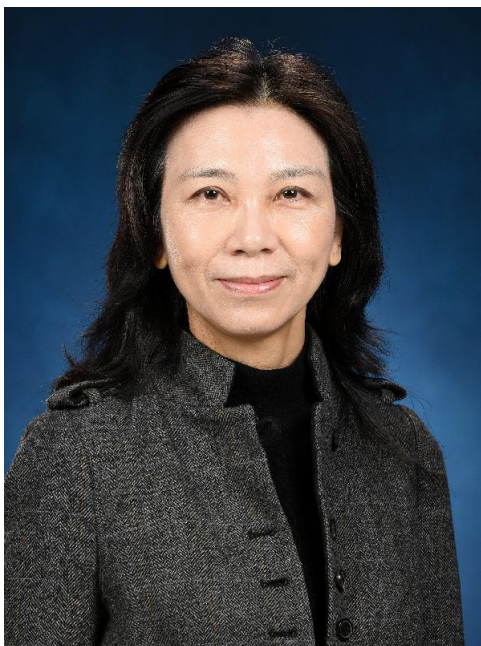
The Government announced today (January 16) that Miss Winnie So Chui-ying, former Deputy Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, has succeeded Mr Yau Kin-chung as Secretary General, Joint Secretariat for the Advisory Bodies on Civil Service and Judicial Salaries and Conditions of Service with effect from January 7, 2019.

Commenting on the appointment, the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Joshua Law, said, "Miss So is a seasoned Administrative Officer with proven leadership and management skills. I have every confidence that she will continue to serve the community with professionalism in her new capacity."

A brief biographical note of Miss So is set out below:

Miss Winnie So Chui-ying

Miss So joined the Administrative Service in August 1992 and rose to the rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B in April 2017. She has served in various bureaux and departments, including the former Monetary Affairs Branch, the former Financial Services Branch, the former City and New Territories Administration, the Home Affairs Department, the University Grants Committee, the former Home Affairs Branch, the Home Affairs Bureau, the former Central Policy Unit, the former Education and Manpower Bureau, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, the former Television and Entertainment Licensing Authority and the former Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau. She was Principal Assistant Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands) from July 2009 to November 2015, and served as Deputy Director, Office of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in Beijing and then Deputy Secretary of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau from November 2015 to January 2019.



[Hong Kong resident employer jailed for employing illegal worker](#)

A Hong Kong resident employer who employed an illegal worker was jailed at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (January 15).

During an anti-illegal employment operation mounted earlier, Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators raided a restaurant in Hung Hom and arrested

a 47-year-old female Mainlander who worked as a waitress. In addition, she was also suspected of using and being in possession of a forged identity card. The Hong Kong resident employer of the illegal worker was also arrested.

The illegal worker was jailed for 15 months by Shatin Magistrates' Courts earlier. The Hong Kong resident employer was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with being an employer of a person who is not lawfully employable as she did not take all practicable steps to ascertain whether the applicant was lawfully employable prior to employment. She pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to two months' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

LCQ14: Convention and exhibition facilities

Following is a question by the Hon Jimmy Ng and a written reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, in the Legislative Council today (January 16):

Question:

The consultancy study report on the Demand Study for New Convention and Exhibition Facilities in Hong Kong published in 2015 pointed out that 84 400 and 132 500 square metres of additional convention and exhibition (C&E) space would be needed in Hong Kong by 2023 and 2028 respectively. The Government has anticipated that not until 2026, at the earliest, will the sites of the three government towers in Wan Chai North and the adjacent Kong Wan Fire Station be vacated for the provision of additional C&E venues and other uses. As phase two expansion plan of the AsiaWorld-Expo (AWE) is currently at the

stage of discussion with the Airport Authority Hong Kong, its implementation schedule has yet to be drawn up. The industry is therefore worried that the shortage of C&E facilities can hardly be ameliorated in the short to medium term. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows the respective numbers of days of last year on which the exhibition venues of the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) and AWE reached saturation; the respective numbers of exhibitions, held in HKCEC and AWE in each of the past five years, for which all the exhibition areas of the respective venues were hired, with a breakdown by theme type to which the exhibitions belonged;

(2) whether it knows the respective numbers of applications for renting venues for C&E events turned down by the administrators of HKCEC and AWE last year due to shortage of space, and the economic loss caused by such situation to Hong Kong in each of the past five years;

(3) of the short-term measures taken to alleviate the shortage of C&E facilities and the effectiveness of such measures;

(4) whether it has measures in place to expedite the vacation of the sites of the three government towers in Wan Chai North and the Kong Wan Fire Station; if not, of the reasons for that;

(5) when the Government plans to finalise the phase two expansion plan of AWE with the Airport Authority Hong Kong; of the anticipated date of completion of the plan and the area of C&E facilities that can be provided by then; and

(6) whether it has assessed if Hong Kong will still face the problem of shortage of C&E facilities upon the completion of the new C&E facilities currently under planning; if it has assessed and the outcome is in the affirmative, of the solutions?

Reply:

President,

The convention and exhibition (C&E) industry is vital to Hong Kong as an international business and trading centre. In order to reinforce the advantages of C&E industry in Hong Kong and enhance the synergy between C&E venues and facilities in their vicinity, the Government has been working in earnest to increase the supply of C&E venues. Regarding the question raised by the Hon Jimmy Ng, our reply is as follows.

(1) According to the information provided by the management companies of the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) and AsiaWorld-Expo (AWE), in 2018, the purpose-built exhibition facilities of HKCEC reached saturation on 75 days, and AWE reached saturation on 81 days. The standalone exhibitions which rented all the areas of HKCEC/AWE in the recent five years and their theme types are tabulated below:

Year	Standalone exhibitions which rented all the areas of the venues concerned			
	HKCEC		AWE	
	Type	Number	Type	Number
2014	Jewellery	3	Electronics	2
	Gifts	1		
	Procurement	1	Jewellery	1
	Beauty	1		
2015	Jewellery	3	Electronics	2
	Gifts	1		
	Procurement	1	Jewellery	1
	Beauty	1		
2016	Jewellery	3	Electronics	2
	Gifts	1		
	Procurement	1	Jewellery	1
	Beauty	1		
2017	Jewellery	3	Electronics	2
	Gifts	1		
	Procurement	1	Jewellery	1
	Beauty	1		
2018	Jewellery	3	Electronics	3
	Gifts	1		
	Procurement	1	Jewellery	1
	Beauty	1		

The numbers above only include standalone exhibitions which rented all the areas of HKCEC/AWE, and do not include exhibitions that were held concurrently and collectively rented all the areas of the venues concerned. Furthermore, although some individual exhibitions did not rent the entire exhibition venues, the remaining areas of the venues were not available for hosting other concurrent exhibitions because the exhibitions concerned had already rented most of the areas, or because of the exhibitions' nature (e.g. security, visitor flow and/or technical requirements).

(2) According to the information provided by the management companies of HKCEC and AWE, in 2018, the two venues respectively turned down 31 and 47 applications for C&E events due to shortage of venue.

According to the consultancy study commissioned by the Government in 2014, a wide array of information is required to assess the total economic loss arising from the total unmet demand for C&E venues, including demand for venues, number of events and participants, expenditure figures of events and participants, etc., in order to estimate the direct expenditure, indirect expenditure, induced expenditure, value added and associated employment

estimates. Since the assessment involves substantial commercially-sensitive information and complex calculations, the Government is unable to estimate the economic loss to Hong Kong caused by turning down applications for C&E events due to shortage of venue.

(3) In tandem with developing new C&E facilities, the Government will, through the Meetings and Exhibitions Hong Kong of the Hong Kong Tourism Board, continue to provide all-round support services for international organisers which plan to organise conferences and exhibitions in Hong Kong to ensure the smooth staging of such events. The services include introducing suitable venues, such as HKCEC, AWE, Kowloonbay International Trade & Exhibition Centre, meeting facilities of various hotels and other possible event space, based on the needs of the organisers.

(4) The Chief Executive announced in the October 2017 Policy Address that the Government will develop Wan Chai North into a C&E hub in Asia. To this end, the Government is actively taking forward the redevelopment of the three government towers in Wan Chai North and Kong Wan Fire Station into C&E facilities, hotel and office. Due to the massive scale of the relocation, which involves 29 government departments and the Judiciary with over 10 000 staff, as well as the time required to construct various new government buildings for relocation, the relocation exercise is being taken forward in phases. The West Kowloon Government Offices will be the first relocation project to be completed, and the departments concerned will move in from January in phases. Other relocation projects are being taken forward as planned. The Government expects that the relocation would be completed by 2026 the earliest for vacating the sites for the development of C&E facilities, hotel and office.

(5) The Airport Authority Hong Kong (AA) completed the acquisition of the private interest in AWE in September last year, providing room and opportunities to better leverage the advantages of the existing AWE in hosting C&E events. In addition, the Government will discuss with AA on the phase two expansion plan of AWE to further increase the supply of C&E facilities in Hong Kong, so as to strengthen the competitiveness of C&E industry in Hong Kong.

(6) In parallel with actively taking forward the projects mentioned in parts (4) and (5) above, the Government will continue to explore ways to better utilise existing venues in HKCEC and AWE, as well as other proposals to increase C&E facilities. Nevertheless, with limited land in Hong Kong, the Government needs to, in parallel with expanding C&E facilities, define the strategic position to focus on C&E events which bring more economic contributions to Hong Kong, so as to maintain Hong Kong's competitive edge in the C&E industry.

Traffic and public transport arrangements for stage 1 commissioning of Central – Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link

The stage 1 commissioning of the Central – Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link (CWB) will take place at 8am on January 20 (Sunday). The Transport Department (TD) today (January 16) announced the respective traffic and public transport arrangements.

(1) To tie in with the stage 1 commissioning of the CWB, the eastbound elevated road of Connaught Road West and Connaught Road Central, and Man Kat Street in Central will be closed in phases between 11.30pm on January 19 and about 6am on the following day. Affected vehicles will be diverted to the at-grade road of Connaught Road West and Connaught Road Central, whereas vehicles on Man Kat Street will be diverted to Man Kwong Street and Man Yiu Street.

(2) The traffic lanes on Rumsey Street Flyover eastbound leading to Pedder Street Underpass will be closed from 11.30 pm on January 19. Affected vehicles (including eight bus routes, namely NWFB routes 18P, 18X, CTB routes 962E, 967X, 969P, 969X, A12 and Cross Harbour route 101X, and Hong Kong Island green minibus routes 10P, 28 and 31X) will be diverted via Man Po Street.

(3) After the commissioning of the CWB, motorists can make use of the CWB for travelling between Central and Island Eastern Corridor in North Point, and also use the portals in Wan Chai (North) or the entrance at Tsing Fung Street for accessing to CWB.

(4) Starting from January 21, four bus routes using the CWB, including one new route (NWFB route 720X) and three routes to be diverted (NWFB route 88X, CTB routes 962C and 969C), will commence service.

The TD reminded members of the public that during the stage 1 commissioning of the CWB, the link road connecting the CWB and Rumsey Street Flyover westbound will still be under construction for about one month. It is anticipated that traffic will be busier than usual in the vicinity of the Central portal of the CWB and Connaught Road Central during the morning and evening hours in the initial stage of the CWB commissioning. Motorists are advised to plan their journey in advance and allow more travelling time to access the above areas.

The TD expects that the traffic condition along Gloucester Road, Harcourt Road and Connaught Road Central will be improved after the commissioning of the CWB. Hence, motorists can continue to use existing roads

to travel to the Western District and Western Harbour Crossing.

During the initial stage of the CWB commissioning, motorists will need some time to become familiar with the new driving routes. The TD reminds motorists to drive with care and pay attention to traffic signs and directional signs. Motorists are also advised to follow Police instructions and watch out for the latest traffic news. Passengers taking buses and minibuses should take note of the above public transport service arrangements.

Members of the public can obtain information on the above traffic and transport arrangements through the "HKeMobility" mobile application or the TD's website (www.td.gov.hk/en/cwb/index.html), or call 1823 for enquiries.