

Records of conviction, revocation/refusal of renewal of licence and written warnings of employment agencies to be published online

The Labour Department (LD) announced today (October 10) that the records of conviction, revocation/refusal of renewal of licence and written warnings of employment agencies (EAs) will be published at its online Employment Agencies Portal (EA Portal) (www.eaa.labour.gov.hk) starting from today.

The following three lists will be published at the EA Portal:

- (a) A list of EAs convicted of the offences of overcharging or unlicensed operation. A record will be published for a period of 24 months;
- (b) A list of EAs whose licences were revoked/refused renewal. A record will be published for a period of 12 months; and
- (c) A list of EAs which were issued written warnings for non-compliance with the Code of Practice for EAs. A record will be published for a period of 12 months.

A spokesman for LD said, "There have been longstanding requests from the community, including users of EA services, to enhance transparency and facilitate public access to EAs' track records. To better protect the interests of the public, the LD consulted relevant stakeholders and conducted a public consultation from August 10 to September 7 on the proposal (www.eaa.labour.gov.hk/_res/pdf/EAA_Consultation_2018.pdf) to publish the aforementioned three lists on the EA Portal."

The spokesman added, "The views received during the consultation generally supported the proposal, recognising that it would enhance transparency and enable job seekers (including foreign domestic helpers) and employers to make better informed decisions and avoid falling prey to unscrupulous EAs or EAs without a valid licence when engaging the related services. The enhanced transparency would also foster the adoption of good practices by the EA industry. Having considered the views received, the LD decided to roll out the initiative as proposed in the consultation paper."

The aforementioned three lists will be maintained on the EA Portal, which will be updated regularly to ensure accuracy of the information displayed. Job seekers and employers are encouraged to make reference to the lists before engaging the services of EAs.

For enquiries, please call the hotline of the LD's Employment Agencies

EMSD announces test results of LPG quality in September 2018

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) today (October 10) announced that the department collected eight liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) samples from auto-LPG filling stations and LPG terminals on a random basis in September 2018 for laboratory tests. The results showed that the LPG quality of all these samples complied with auto-LPG specifications.

The detailed test results are available on the EMSD's website (www.emsd.gov.hk/emsd/eng/sgi/lpg_smpl_analysis.shtml). Enquiries can also be made to the EMSD's hotline on 2333 3762.

In addition, the EMSD has been vetting independent third-party test reports submitted by LPG supply companies for each shipment to ensure that the quality of imported LPG complies with the specified requirements.

FS speaks on "The Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address" (with video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at a media session on "The Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address" at the Legislative Council Complex today (October 10):

Reporter: The foreign ministry said it issued a statement, other foreign bodies issued statements demanding the authorities for an explanation. Isn't it already a sign that Hong Kong's image has greatly been damaged?

Financial Secretary: The Chief Executive and the Chief Secretary for Administration have both indicated the stance of the Hong Kong SAR Government, and in this respect I do not have anything particular to supplement. But keeping "one country, two systems" is very dear to our hearts, and this is the most important foundation for our economic development. We will preserve it and defend it, of course. Thank you.

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

CS speaks on “The Chief Executive’s 2018 Policy Address”

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, at a media session on "The Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address" at the Legislative Council Complex today (October 10):

The theme of the Chief Executive's second Policy Address is "Striving Ahead, Rekindling Hope". This well-chosen theme underlines the determination of the current-term Government to propel Hong Kong forward in face of increasing fierce regional and global competition. We also need to bring hope to all sectors of the community and vigorously promote upward social mobility.

We have rolled out altogether 244 new measures. They fully reflect the Government's political courage to tackle difficult tasks head-on. We are resolute and persistent in confronting the various long-entrenched and deep-seated problems.

Land and housing supply is the most thorny issue. The Chief Executive has announced a package of measures to boost housing supply in the short to medium term. With the completion of various major infrastructure projects, Lantau will become the "Double Gateway" to the world and the Greater Bay Area. In order to capture various competitive advantages and opportunities of Lantau and for the long-term benefits of Hong Kong's future, we are going to launch the Lantau Tomorrow Vision project which will provide 260 000 to 400 000 housing units of which 70 per cent are for public housing, accommodate 700 000 to 1.1 million people and provide 340 000 jobs.

We will continue to care, listen and act on the basis of the principles of "Innovative, Interactive and Collaborative" to implement people-oriented measures for a better and more harmonious Hong Kong. We will roll out a number of major initiatives to improve people's livelihood on all fronts. The key examples include:

- (i) Enhance substantially financial support for employers and micro, small and medium enterprises in preparing them for the abolition of the Mandatory Provident Fund "offsetting" arrangement. This would cost the Government \$29.3 billion over 25 years;
- (ii) Provide \$1.5 billion in recurrent funding to implement the all-graduate teaching force policy;
- (iii) Provide \$800 million in recurrent funding to enhance educational psychologist and speech therapist services for students with special educational needs;

- (iv) Extend statutory maternity leave from 10 weeks to 14 weeks;
- (v) Legislate for a ban on electronic cigarettes;
- (vi) Strengthen primary healthcare services by setting up the first District Health Centre in Kwai Tsing, and extending this model to other districts;
- (vii) Recognise the positioning of Chinese medicine services in Hong Kong's healthcare system and set up a \$500 million fund to promote Chinese medicine applied research;
- (viii) Waive or pay for the tolls charged on franchised buses for using government or franchised tunnels/roads to ease fare increase pressure particularly on the commuters; and
- (ix) Draw on over HK\$500 million in funding allocation to enhance support for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong.

The current-term Government will continue to perform our roles as "facilitator" and "promoter" to proactively foster Hong Kong's long-term economic and social development, provide more land for housing and future economic activities, reinforce Hong Kong's advantages by stepping up investment in education as well as innovation and technology, scale up our established industries, improve people's livelihood and promote quality living. In short, our aim is for the Government to join hands with the whole community to forge and build a future full of hope and opportunities. Thank you.

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

Number of overseas and Mainland companies in HK continues to grow

The number of business operations in Hong Kong with parent companies overseas and in Mainland China climbed to 8 754 in 2018, compared to 8 225 a year ago, according to the results of a joint survey conducted by Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) and the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD).

Results of the 2018 Annual Survey of Companies in Hong Kong with Parent Companies Located Outside Hong Kong show that the 8 754 respondent companies comprised 1 530 operating as regional headquarters (RHQs), 2 425 as regional offices (ROs) and 4 799 as local offices (LOs).

In terms of jobs, the number of people engaged by the overseas and Mainland companies reached 485 000, compared to 443 000 in 2017.

By sector, import/export trade, wholesale and retail topped the list (3

950), followed by financing and banking (1 806), and professional, business and education services (1 262).

Survey definitions

Regional Headquarters: an office with parent company located outside Hong Kong which has managerial control over offices and/or operations in the region (i.e. Hong Kong plus one other place or more).

Regional Office: an office with parent company located outside Hong Kong which co-ordinates offices and/or operations in the region (i.e. Hong Kong plus one other place or more).

Local Office: an office with parent company located outside Hong Kong which only takes charge of the business in Hong Kong (and nowhere else).

Survey methodology

This survey, the response to which is voluntary in nature, refers to the position as at June 1, 2018. Owing to the lack of a complete sampling frame of companies covered in the survey, the number of RHQs, ROs and LOs enumerated in each survey round represents only the best snapshot that could be taken at the time of the survey. Changes between years in the number of RHQs, ROs and LOs may be affected by the continuous improvement in the sampling frame of companies and response rate. Specifically, the sampling frame for the 2018 survey has been enriched by including additional information obtained from the Companies Registry, consulates and chambers of commerce of overseas countries in Hong Kong. The scope of the survey has also been expanded in the 2018 survey to cover companies with parent companies located outside Hong Kong but not representing their parent companies, although the effect of such change on the survey results is relatively insignificant. Furthermore, changes between years in the total number of people engaged by the companies concerned may also be affected by the response patterns of companies of different employment sizes. With all the limitations mentioned above, the survey results should be interpreted with some caution.

The survey results will be presented in greater detail in the "Report on 2018 Annual Survey of Companies in Hong Kong with Parent Companies Located outside Hong Kong" published by the C&SD. The publication will be available for download free of charge at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp360.jsp?productCode=B1110004) as from end-October 2018.

Users who have enquiries about the survey results may contact the Business Expectation Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3586 3015; email: regional-offices@censtat.gov.hk).