

C&WDO receives report of loss of hirer data by facility management services contractor of Sai Ying Pun Community Complex

The Central and Western District Office (C&WDO) received a report of the loss of hirer data by a facility management services contractor today (September 16).

The C&WDO has engaged a facility management services contractor, Synergis Facility Management Limited (the Contractor), to assist in managing the Sai Ying Pun Community Complex Community Hall (the Community Hall) and handling the booking applications for use of the Community Hall and its facility from September 2022 to August 2025.

The Contractor reported to the C&WDO this morning that a staff member of the Contractor, who is responsible for handling the booking applications for use of the Community Hall and its facility, had lost a portable device (USB) during work on September 14. The device contains the name of organisation, date and time of the event, name and contact number of the contact person for 306 applicants. The data involved does not include any identity card number or other personal identifiers.

Upon receiving the report, the C&WDO promptly requested and accompanied the Contractor to report the incident to the Police and reported the matter to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data this afternoon. The C&WDO is contacting all the affected applicants to offer apologies and explain the incident. Meanwhile, a hotline (2852 3735) has been set up for persons affected to make enquiries. The C&WDO has also immediately suspended the Contractor from handling the booking applications for use of the Community Hall and its facility. The Home Affairs Department (HAD) has also informed the Property Management Services Authority to take appropriate follow-up action as the Contractor has failed to handle personal data properly as a licensed property management company.

The C&WDO sincerely apologises to the persons affected for any inconvenience caused and will follow up seriously to prevent reoccurrence of similar incidents. The C&WDO strongly condemns the Contractor concerned for the incident and has required the Contractor to submit a detailed report and take all necessary measures to prevent further leakage of the data involved. The HAD will not allow the Contractor to bid any other projects of the HAD until it has taken satisfactory measures.

CHP updates on latest situation of invasive Group B Streptococcus infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (September 16) continued its investigation into the latest situation of invasive Group B Streptococcus infection. The CHP appealed to members of the public for heightened vigilance and in particular, to pay attention when touching or handling raw freshwater fish and should wear gloves, as well as not to consume undercooked freshwater fish.

The CHP has been monitoring with the Hospital Authority (HA) the admission figures in relation to invasive Group B Streptococcus infection cases. Since the [announcement](#) of the situation of Group B Streptococcus infection belonged to serotype III sequence type 283 (ST283) on September 13, the CHP has today confirmed 13 additional ST283 cases involving patients recently admitted with invasive Group B Streptococcus infection. The CHP's epidemiological investigations showed that the 13 patients with ST283 infections involved seven males and six females, aged between 35 and 94. The patients mainly presented with sepsis (eight patients) and joint abscess (five patients). Together with the 27 cases of ST283 infection announced on September 13, this cluster involved a cumulative total of 40 patients residing in 18 districts throughout the territory. Their onset date of the disease were between August 8 and September 5, and 30 of them have underlying illnesses. The HA's information showed that among the 40 patients, 10 have been discharged, 25 hospitalised patients are in stable condition, three in serious condition and the other two with underlying illness passed away.

The CHP's analysis of samples of other recently admitted patients is still in progress and it cannot rule out that the number of cases will further increase.

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The CHP's epidemiological investigations revealed that 31 patients have contacted with or handled raw freshwater fish before onset of symptoms (five of them reported that they had wounds on their hands when handling raw freshwater fish), six patients cannot rule out that they have consumed undercooked freshwater fish (not freshwater fish sashimi), and the exposure history of the remaining three patients is under investigation.

Furthermore, none of the 40 patients were fishmongers or engaged in fish culture related jobs. As the patients resided in various districts throughout the territory, and the freshwater fishes concerned were bought from 23 markets in 11 districts respectively, the CHP considered that the affected freshwater fish may involve the wholesale level. After knowing that the genetic sequence of samples collected from a retail freshwater fish stall matched those found in some patients, the CHP immediately teamed up with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) to conduct an

inspection in the Freshwater Fish Market under the Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market, and collect environmental samples for testing and analysis. The laboratory analysis is still in progress. So far, no abnormality has been observed regarding the freshwater fish in the wholesale fish markets. Besides, the CHP and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) have conducted medical surveillance on over 200 workers and no symptomatic worker identified. The FEHD have strengthened the cleansing and disinfection of the relevant markets.

The CHP has issued a letter to doctors to enhance their alertness for Group B Streptococcus infection cases. The CHP's investigations, as well as prevention and control works, which include closely monitoring the admission cases, conducting genetic analysis of patients' bacterial samples, testing environmental samples, and strengthening health education to workers and the public, especially the education related to wound care and consumption of freshwater fish, are still ongoing. The AFCD will continue to monitor the health condition of freshwater fish supplied to Hong Kong and ensure that there are no abnormalities and to implement feasible measures to reduce proliferation of bacteria.

"Members of the public shall wear gloves when touching or handling raw freshwater fish. If symptoms such as inflamed wound and fever develop, they should seek medical attention promptly. Meanwhile, the public should refrain from consuming undercooked freshwater fish," a spokesman for the CHP reminded.

To prevent Group B Streptococcus (ST283) infection, members of the public are reminded to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene and should keep their hands clean and practice good wound care at all times, especially:

- To minimise the infection risks, workers of aquatic products or restaurants must wear gloves when handling aquatic products and avoid direct contact with aquatic products or dirty water with bare hands;
- When buying aquatic products, the public must avoid direct contact with the aquatic products or use any towel provided by the stalls. They should wash hands with liquid soap and water as soon as possible if having contact with aquatic products which are not fully cooked. When handling aquatic products at home, the public should also wear gloves and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Members of the public must not eat any freshwater fish sashimi, raw or undercooked freshwater aquatic products. When consuming hot pot food or congee items which consist of aquatic products, they should ensure that the food is thoroughly cooked in which the centre of the food should reach a temperature of at least 75 degrees Celsius so as to destroy pathogen; and
- People must not touch aquatic products directly whenever there is a wound on hands. If a wound is sustained during handling aquatic products, the wound must be cleaned immediately and properly covered with waterproof adhesive dressings. Individuals should seek medical

advice promptly when wound infection is found.

The public may visit the CHP's [Invasive Group B Streptococcus Infection associated with Sequence Type 283 \(ST283\)](#) page for more information.

Tourism Strategy Committee holds second meeting (with photos)

The Tourism Strategy Committee, chaired by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, held its second meeting today (September 16). At the meeting, Mr Yeung discussed with members the changes in travel patterns and visitor habits. He encouraged the tourism and related trade to understand the changes, respond to the changes and embrace them, introduce tourism, catering and retail products with Hong Kong characteristics to attract visitors as well as join hands with the Government to promote Hong Kong's tourism development and boost the economy. Views on the proposed directions of the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry 2.0 (Blueprint 2.0) and how to further promote the theme of "tourism is everywhere in Hong Kong" were exchanged at the meeting as well. Besides, representatives from the Hong Kong Tourism Board briefed members about Hong Kong's latest tourism performance and the relevant statistics.

Mr Yeung said, "The provisional visitor arrival figure for August this year was close to 4.5 million, representing a year-on-year increase of over 9 per cent and reaching a record high for a single month since the full opening of the borders in February 2023. We are encouraged to note that in the first eight months of this year, more than 29.5 million visitor arrivals were recorded, representing a year-on-year increase of 45 per cent. Of them, about 23 million were Mainland visitors and over 6.5 million were non-Mainland visitors, representing year-on-year increase of about 39 per cent and 63 per cent respectively."

He added, "With the strong recovery in visitor arrivals, the Government will continue to work with different sectors of the community to enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong's tourism industry and strive to pursue 'tourism is everywhere in Hong Kong'. At the meeting, members expressed their endorsement and support for the Government's continued policy direction of making good use of Hong Kong's rich tourism resources to actively motivate the trade to develop characteristic tourism products to promote Hong Kong's unique appeal to the world and attract more visitors to Hong Kong. The Government also encourages the trade to seize the business opportunities arising from the Central Government's gifting of two giant pandas to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and the two giant panda cubs born

in Hong Kong, exercise creativity and introduce giant panda products with local characteristics to offer special giant panda experience to visitors."

He further said, "The Government has completed 27 consultation sessions with the trade on Blueprint 2.0, met with more than 110 trade organisations and received over 1 000 recommendations. The Government is now pressing ahead with the formulation of various strategies and initiatives for the Blueprint 2.0 with a view to promoting speedy and quality development of the tourism industry. Our plan is to finalise and publish the contents of the Blueprint 2.0 within this year."

At the meeting, members put forward different suggestions for promoting the theme of "tourism is everywhere in Hong Kong", such as stepping up effort in developing island tourism, green tourism and continuing to make good use of technology to enhance visitor experience. Furthermore, Mr Yeung briefed members about the latest updates regarding the Central Government's gifting of another two giant pandas to the HKSAR, the birth of two giant panda cubs by giant panda Ying Ying on August 15 this year as well as a series of territory-wide publicity and promotional activities being actively arranged by the Government together with Ocean Park and various sectors of the community. Members offered advice on how to further drive the giant panda popularity across the whole city and grasp the business opportunities thus brought about. Additionally, the Tourism Commission briefed the committee about two creative tourism projects, namely the Sai Kung Hoi Arts Festival and the Design District Hong Kong, which will be launched again in November and December this year respectively.

The Tourism Strategy Committee is tasked to provide the Government with strategic advice and foster collaboration among different stakeholders in tourism and related sectors for further promoting the long-term and sustainable development of Hong Kong's tourism industry. Members include prominent figures and key leaders from the tourism and other related sectors such as culture, sports, retail and catering, etc.



HKMA and DFSA hold joint conference to strengthen sustainable finance collaboration (with photos)

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) and the Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA) concluded their inaugural Joint Climate Finance Conference today (September 16). The hybrid conference, which took place in Hong Kong, brought together more than 240 participants from financial institutions, industry associations, and international organisations across both regions.

Under the theme "Building a Net-Zero Asia – Middle East Corridor", the event discussed the demand for, and the gap in, transition finance, and explored the opportunity for greater collaboration between Hong Kong and Dubai. It highlighted the vision for the net-zero transition in each market, and for encouraging investment into the transition.

The HKMA and the DFSA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to further deepen their strategic partnership on sustainable finance. Through this partnership, both authorities will engage in enhanced cross-border dialogue, deepen the exchange of information on recent trends, and conduct joint research and events to further drive progress in this crucial area.

The Chief Executive of the HKMA, Mr Eddie Yue, said, "Climate change is a global challenge that requires a collaborative response. Hong Kong and Dubai, as the sustainable finance hubs in Asia and the Middle East, and the key gateways between East and West, can and should do more together. The inaugural conference is our first effort to build a 'Net-zero Asia – Middle East Corridor'. I look forward to many more fruitful collaborations between the HKMA and the DFSA."

The Chief Executive of the DFSA, Mr Ian Johnston, said, "As we strive to achieve net-zero targets, it is crucial to establish strong partnerships that allow for the exchange of expertise, regulatory alignment, and the promotion of sustainable investment opportunities. The signing of this MOU with the HKMA represents a pivotal step in reinforcing the co-operation between Dubai and Hong Kong in climate finance. Through its ambitious Economic Agenda D33, Dubai is committed to leading the charge on environmental, social, and governance initiatives. Today's signing is a testament to our shared ambition with Hong Kong to accelerate the transition towards a low-carbon economy."

The HKMA and the DFSA will continue working closely to promote sustainable finance, including transition finance. The enhanced partnership will support both regions in exploring opportunities to mobilise capital to support the green and sustainable growth of the wider economies.



CFS continues to crack down on inbound persons illegally bringing regulated food into Hong Kong (with photos)

A spokesman for the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) announced today (September 16) that in order to combat inbound persons illegally bringing regulated food such as raw meat, poultry and eggs into Hong Kong, the CFS has continuously stepped up interception and mounted enforcement actions, and deployed quarantine detector dogs to assist law enforcement officers in carrying out their duties at various land boundary control points, all in an effort to safeguard public health.

During the CFS's operation over the past week (September 9 to 15), 68 cases concerning inbound persons suspected of illegally bringing regulated food into Hong Kong were found. All these persons were unable to provide health certificates for the relevant food. Three of the cases were detected by quarantine detector dogs, and upon investigation by law enforcement officers, raw meat was found in the personal baggage of the two inbound persons, one of whom had vacuum-packed raw meat, while raw eggs were found in the personal baggage of the remaining inbound person. Should there be sufficient evidence, prosecution will be instituted against the persons

involved. The investigations are ongoing.

The CFS will continue to maintain close liaison and exchange of intelligence with other enforcement departments, including Hong Kong Customs, and step up enforcement operations at various boundary control points. As of yesterday, the CFS has instituted over 1 400 prosecutions against inbound persons for illegally bringing regulated food into Hong Kong this year, nearly double the number from the same period last year.

Under the Import and Export Ordinance (Cap. 60), each consignment of imported meat and poultry is required to apply for an import licence from the FEHD. In addition, pursuant to the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap. 132AK), each consignment of imported game, meat, poultry and eggs must be accompanied by a health certificate issued by the issuing entity of the place of origin and/or import permission of the FEHD. Offenders are liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment.

The CFS reminds members of the public not to defy the law by importing regulated food without a recognised health certificate, written permission from the FEHD or an import licence. In addition, the CFS will continue strengthening publicity and education at various control points and reminding the public through various channels (e.g. websites, posters, leaflets and social media) that they must abide by the relevant Hong Kong laws when purchasing food across the boundary.

