

Appeal for information on missing man in Tuen Mun (with photos)

Police today (September 5) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Tuen Mun.

Leung Shek-lau, aged 77, went missing after he was last seen at Leung King Estate in the small hours yesterday (September 4). His family made a report to Police on the same day.

He is about 1.6 metres tall, 60 kilograms in weight and of thin build. He has a pointed face with yellow complexion and short black and white hair. He was last seen wearing a beige long-sleeved shirt, black trousers and blue slippers.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Persons Unit of New Territories North on 3661 3127 or email to rmpu-ntn-1@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.



CHP reminds public on precautions against heat stroke during very hot weather

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH)

today (September 5) reminded members of the public, particularly those undertaking outdoor activities, to take heed of necessary measures against heat stroke and sunburn in very hot weather.

"The public should carry and drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration while engaging in outdoor activities," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Those engaged in strenuous outdoor activities should avoid beverages containing caffeine, such as coffee and tea, as well as alcohol, as they speed up water loss through the urinary system," the spokesman explained.

"Infants and children, the elderly, pregnant women, those with chronic illnesses such as heart disease or high blood pressure, outdoor/manual workers, and individuals who are overweight are more vulnerable to heat stroke. They should pay special attention," the spokesman added.

The public should adopt the following precautions:

- Wear loose and light-coloured clothing to reduce heat absorption and facilitate sweat evaporation and heat dissipation;
- Avoid vigorous exercise and prolonged activities like hiking or trekking as heat, sweating and exhaustion can place additional demands on the physique;
- Perform outdoor activities in the morning or the late afternoon, if possible;
- For indoor activities, open all windows, use a fan or use air-conditioning to maintain good ventilation;
- Do not stay inside a parked vehicle; and
- Reschedule work to cooler times of the day if feasible. If working in a hot environment is inevitable, introduce shade in the workplace where practicable. Start work slowly and pick up the pace gradually. Move to a cool area for rest at regular intervals to allow the body to recuperate.

â€‹The public should also note the latest and the forecast Ultraviolet (UV) Index released by the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO). When the UV Index is high (6 or above):

- Minimise direct exposure of the skin and the eyes to sunlight;
- Wear long-sleeved and loose-fitting clothes;
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat or use an umbrella;
- Seek a shaded area or put on UV-blocking sunglasses;
- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen lotion with a minimum sun protection factor (SPF) of 15, preferably higher. Reapply every two hours if you stay out in the sun, and after swimming, sweating or towelling off; and
- While using DEET-containing insect repellents for personal protection against mosquito-borne diseases, apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent.

â€œIf symptoms develop, such as dizziness, headache, nausea, shortness of breath or confusion, rest and seek help immediately, and seek medical advice as soon as possible.

â€œThe public may obtain more information from the DH's Health Education Infoline (2833 0111), [heat stroke](#) page and [UV radiation](#) page; the HKO's Dial-a-Weather (1878 200), latest [weather report and forecast](#), [UV Index](#) and weather information for [hiking and mountaineering](#); and [press releases](#) of the Labour Department on precautions against heat stroke for outdoor workers and their employers when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force.

Very Hot Weather Warning issued

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

The Hong Kong Observatory has issued the Very Hot Weather Warning.

To prevent heat stroke, avoid prolonged activities outdoors.

If engaged in outdoor work or activities, wear a wide-brimmed hat and light-coloured, loose-fitting clothes. Stay in shaded areas as much as possible.

Drink plenty of water, and avoid beverages containing caffeine or alcohol.

If you feel sick, consult a doctor right away.

Transport Department responds to Office of The Ombudsman's direct investigation report on driving test arrangements

In response to a report released by the Office of The Ombudsman today (September 5) on its direct investigation into "Transport Department (TD)'s Arrangements for Driving Tests", the TD responded as follows:

The TD expresses appreciation for the work of the Office of The Ombudsman in the direct investigation and recommendations made on driving test arrangements. With the public's persistent demand for driving test services, coupled with their intermittent suspension between 2020 and 2022 as affected by the COVID-19 epidemic, the waiting time of driving tests remained at a high level in 2022 and 2023.

The TD understands the public's concern over the waiting time of driving tests. To cope with the large number of applications from candidates, the TD has increased the number of driving tests by arranging driving examiners for additional duties on Saturdays where practicable. At present, the waiting time has improved significantly, compared to the peak periods, and returned to the pre-pandemic level. The waiting time of combined driving tests for private car, combined driving tests for light goods vehicle and driving tests for motor cycles (Part C) has significantly decreased from an average of 338, 344 and 245 days respectively in 2022 to 199, 207 and 125 days by end-August 2024.

The TD will continue to fill vacancies and replenish its manpower through the recruitment of driving examiners or extension of service of retired driving examiners. The TD appreciates the Office of The Ombudsman's recognition of its efforts in clearing the backlog of driving test cases, and will continue to closely monitor the queuing situation and increase the number of driving tests as far as practicable to meet the community's demand.

A spokesman for the TD said, "We agree with and will adopt the recommendations of the Office of The Ombudsman. We will continue to review and enhance the work arrangements and staff guidelines, and take appropriate measures to ensure that the Driving Test Centres operate in an orderly manner. In addition, we will review and consider formulating a performance pledge for road tests for non-commercial vehicles."

As for application of technology, the TD will explore the feasibility of introducing new technology in driving tests to assist with the assessment. Nonetheless, in view of the unique nature of driving tests in Hong Kong, where most of the road tests are conducted on public roads and the test vehicles are privately owned, the TD needs to carefully consider the implementation details and stakeholders' views before the introduction of new technology, maintaining a balance among legal requirements, privacy of candidates, cost-effectiveness and other factors.

Office of The Ombudsman announces

results of direct investigation operation into Transport Department's arrangements for driving tests and Ombudsman's strategic focuses (with photos)

The following is issued on behalf of the Office of The Ombudsman:

The Ombudsman, Mr Jack Chan, today (September 5) announced the completion of a direct investigation operation into the arrangements for driving tests by the Transport Department (TD), and made 12 major recommendations to the Department.

In recent years, there has been an increasing public demand for driving tests and the average waiting time of driving tests is very long. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the TD suspended the written tests and road tests on six occasions, resulting in a backlog of driving test applications. In November 2022, the waiting time for road tests for private cars and light goods vehicles had once been more than 340 days.

On the other hand, the Office of The Ombudsman's investigation found a rising number of appeals against road test results in recent years. The number of appeals had doubled from 192 cases in 2017 to 380 cases in 2023, reflecting an increase in the public's discontent with the TD's road test arrangements.

The Office also noticed that since the pandemic ended, the TD had recruited more Driving Examiners (DEs) and made use of technology to increase road test output. The waiting time for road tests for private cars and light goods vehicles has now shrunk to around 200 days.

While recognising the efforts made by the Department, the Office considers that there is still room for improvement in the arrangements for driving tests.

Mr Chan said, "In addition to proactively exploring how to increase road test output by redeploying manpower resources and designating new test venues, the TD should also review the Duty Reporting Arrangement. Before our investigation, DEs are required to arrive at the TD Headquarters in Ho Man Tin, Kowloon, every day for ballot-drawing to determine the test centres they are responsible for, and then proceed to the various driving test centres to discharge their duties. We are pleased to learn that in response to our investigation, the TD has since mid-June this year implemented the Direct Reporting Arrangement on a trial basis at four driving test centres. We recommend that the TD review the Arrangement. If the trial is positively received, the Department should proactively study the feasibility of

extending the Arrangement to other driving test centres. It is estimated that if the Direct Reporting Arrangement is implemented, about 5 500 additional road tests for non-commercial vehicles can be conducted each year, meaning that an additional 5 500 candidates can be benefited. We consider that this recommendation, which does not require additional manpower, man hour or test venues but only a change of the reporting arrangement for the DEs, is worth pursuing.

"With the growing popularity of dashboard cameras and the rapid technological development, installing video recording equipment in test vehicles is the prevailing trend, and it actually has certain practical benefits. The Office opines that the TD should seriously review its current practice of prohibiting video recording of road tests. We agree that protecting personal privacy is of paramount importance. If it is concluded that video recording is feasible, the TD should examine measures to protect personal privacy and continuously communicate with the stakeholders in the course of introducing video-recording equipment specifically for road tests. I understand that the TD is conducting a relevant feasibility study, which covers technical requirements, privacy issues and legal liabilities. We consider it the right direction to take."

The Ombudsman has made the following improvement recommendations to the TD:

- to proactively explore ways to further increase road test output through flexible manpower deployment. For instance, it can consider arranging for the DEs to work extra hours on weekends;
- to study proactively the feasibility of increasing road test output by designating more driving test centres at locations farther away from the city centre or residential areas in various parts of Hong Kong;
- to conscientiously review the trial run of the Direct Reporting Arrangement at the four driving test centres;
- if the above trial arrangement is positively received, the TD should proactively examine the possibility of extending the Arrangement to other driving test centres;
- to review and consider resuming the practice of setting service standards and achievement targets in terms of waiting time for road tests for non-commercial vehicles;
- to promulgate guidelines to DEs as soon as possible on the making of instant remarks during road tests;
- to review its current practice of prohibiting video recording of road tests;
- if video recording is feasible upon review, the TD should examine measures to protect personal privacy and communicate with the stakeholders continuously in the course of introducing video-recording equipment specifically for road tests;
- in the long run, to consider whether advanced technology (such as electronic assessment systems) should be employed to help DEs evaluate candidates' performance in driving tests;
- to seriously review the validity periods of the learner's driving

licence and the driving test form;

- to implement suitable measures as soon as possible to prevent the situation where more than one candidate registers the same test vehicle for their road tests during the same time slot because the private driving instructor has to provide his/her vehicle for use by several candidates under a tight road test schedule; and
- to step up management at driving test centres and keep in constant communication with the driving instructor sector with respect to the monitoring of the operations of their staff so as to ensure that road tests are conducted in a fair and orderly manner.

Regarding the way forward, Mr Chan indicated that the overriding objective of the Office is to help resolve the difficulties faced by members of the public so as to improve people's livelihood and foster social harmony.

Mr Chan stated that the Office has three strategic focuses. First of all, in the coming years, the Office will go full steam ahead with the use of mediation to resolve complaints from the public, respond to public demands promptly, and reduce conflicts in society to bring about social cohesion, with a view to revitalising the economy and improving people's livelihood.

"In fact, the Office's investigation and mediation work are complementary. The Office will continue to carry out comprehensive and proactive investigations into cases of maladministration, especially those contain systemic issues. In such instances, the Office will firmly point out the problems to the relevant departments or agencies, provide practical improvement suggestions and monitor the implementation of these recommendations. Furthermore, the Office will inform the public and the media about the investigation results in a timely manner. Where the Office determines that a case does not involve maladministration, it may choose to handle the case through mediation so as to clear the doubts and discontent of those seeking our help. I believe the collaboration of investigation and mediation is the best way to address the everyday issues faced by the public. Mediation would not weaken the investigative functions of the Office; on the contrary, it enhances its role in promoting social harmony."

To foster the strategic goals on mediation and interdepartmental collaboration, the Office will use mediation as the default handling mode in complaint cases involving minor or no maladministration. Moreover, the Office has recently recommended other departments and agencies consider promoting mediation within their offices to resolve complaints efficiently. The Office has also invited other departments and agencies to appoint a Mediation Coordinator in their offices for handling minor complaints lodged with the Office that can be handled through mediation.

Another strategic focus of the Office is to promote interdepartmental collaboration. By handling cases involving interdepartmental collaboration and through organising seminars and exchange forums from time to time, the Office encourages various government departments and public organisations to work together to enhance administrative arrangements for better public services and a stronger sense of gain and happiness among members of the public.

The third strategic focus is to continue instilling a "positive complaint culture" in society and encouraging members of the public (especially the younger generation) to express views in a positive and constructive manner with the aim of improving public administration.

The full investigation report has been uploaded to the website of the Office of The Ombudsman at www.ombudsman.hk for public information.

