

Government responds to enquiries about incidents concerning construction quality of Shatin to Central Link

Regarding media enquiries about the investigation progress of the incidents concerning the construction quality of the MTR Shatin to Central Link (SCL) project, a spokesman for the Government gave the following response today (June 28):

The law enforcement department continues to conduct criminal investigations into the incidents concerning the construction quality of the SCL project. According to the established policy, the Government will not offer any comment on the case at this stage.

Appointments to new term of Advisory Committee on Countryside Conservation

The Environment and Ecology Bureau today (June 28) announced the appointments to the new term of the Advisory Committee on Countryside Conservation (ACCC).

The ACCC was established on July 1, 2019, to advise on the priorities for conservation and revitalisation works proposals to be carried out by the Countryside Conservation Office, as well as advising on the policy and operational matters relating to the Countryside Conservation Funding Scheme. The existing term of non-official membership will end on June 30, 2023. The new term of non-official membership, comprising 10 existing members and four new members, will be effective for two years from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2025.

The Chairman of the ACCC and Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Mr Tse Chin-wan, thanked all existing members for their active participation and invaluable advice on various conservation work in the past two years. He also welcomed the four new members and looked forward to working closely with members of the new term in the next two years on sustainable conservation and revitalisation of the countryside. The membership of the new term of the ACCC is as follows:

Chairperson
Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Non-official Members

Professor Joseph Ting Sun-pao
Professor John Ng Cheuk-yee ¼Š
Mr Eric Lee Chung-ming
Professor Lam Kin-che
Mr William Chiu Chi-fai ¼Š
Mr Andrew Lam Siu-lo
Professor Leslie Chen Hung-chi
Mr Jan Chan Ka-chun
Ms Carmen Chan Ka-mun
Ms Julia Lau Man-kwan ¼Š
Dr Miguel Lau Wai-neng ¼Š
Mr Kenny Lok Ka-ming
Ms Amelia Fok Ching-yin
Ms Sylvia Chung Wai-man

Ex-officio Members

Permanent Secretary for Environment and Ecology (Environment) or representative
Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) or representative
Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation or representative

Secretary

Chief Executive Officer (Countryside Conservation Office), Environment and Ecology Bureau

¼ŠNew Member

LD reminds employers and employees to take heat stroke preventive measures in times of Heat Stress at Work Warning

As the Heat Stress at Work Warning is now in effect, the Labour Department (LD) reminds employers and employees to take appropriate measures during the effective period of the warning to prevent heat stroke when working in hot weather or hot environments.

Employees who work outdoors or in non-air-conditioned indoor environments face high levels of heat stress and are at a relatively higher risk of heat stroke. Employers should assess the risk factors of heat stress for employees at work and, based on the identified risk factors, take necessary preventive and control measures, including rescheduling work

periods, setting up shading covers, providing ventilation and heat dissipation equipment, and reminding employees to replenish water and rest in a timely manner.

The Heat Stress at Work Warning is formulated by the LD based on the Hong Kong Heat Index. There are three levels of the warning: Amber, Red and Black, which help employers and employees better understand the level of heat stress while working outdoors or indoors without air-conditioning systems.

A spokesman for the LD said that when the department issues the Heat Stress at Work Warning, employers must refer to the criteria and recommendations provided in the "[Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work](#)" to conduct risk assessments, according to the workloads and other relevant heat stress risk factors, for employees who work outdoors or in non-air-conditioned indoor workplaces. Appropriate rest breaks should be arranged every hour, as far as reasonably practicable, based on various levels of the Heat Stress at Work Warning, to reduce employees' risk of heat stroke.

Employees must also follow instructions to rest on time. Whenever there are any symptoms of heat-related illnesses, such as headache, dizziness, thirst, and nausea, they should rest in a cool and shady place, drink water, and inform employers/supervisors to take appropriate action immediately.

The LD issued the "Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work", detailing the various risk factors that should be considered when conducting heat stress risk assessments and recommending corresponding control measures for identified risk factors for employers' and employees' reference. For the Heat Stress at Work Warning and related guidelines, please refer to the department's thematic webpage:

www.labour.gov.hk/eng/news/prevention_of_heat_stroke_at_work.htm.

LCQ14: Hong Kong enterprises' investment in fields of innovation and technology on Mainland

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Yung and a written reply by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, in the Legislative Council today (June 28):

Question:

The National 14th Five-Year Plan has expressed clear support for Hong Kong to develop into an international innovation and technology (I&T) hub. However, there are views that according to the Special Administrative

Measures (Negative List) for Foreign Investment Access (2021 Edition) (the Negative List), Hong Kong investors are overseas investors on the Mainland and are not allowed to access some of the fields of biotechnology and information technology services industries, which is not conducive to Hong Kong leveraging its I&T strengths and supporting the development of the nation. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether it will strive for the Central Government's relaxation of the prohibition in the Negative List against investment by Hong Kong enterprises in the development and application of human stem cells as well as genetic diagnosis and treatment technology, and its permission for enterprises which have Chinese Hong Kong permanent residents serving as their major shareholders and are registered in the Lok Ma Chau Loop to access the Mainland market directly, so that such enterprises can be given the same treatment as that given to domestic-funded enterprises?

Reply:

President,

Our country has all along provided staunch support for Hong Kong's innovation and technology (I&T) development. Promulgated in March 2021, the "Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035" indicated clear support for Hong Kong's development into an international I&T centre and, for the first time, included the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Loop as a major Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao co-operation platform. All these fully demonstrate the Central Government's unwavering support for Hong Kong's I&T development. Hong Kong will make good use of the unique advantages under "one country, two systems" and its solid foundation in scientific research to seize opportunities brought about by the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, to integrate into national development and continue to leverage its strengths to serve the country's needs.

Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) is the park on Hong Kong side of the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Co-operation Zone in the Loop. The Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address mentioned that the HSITP is the bridgehead for I&T co-operation between Hong Kong and Shenzhen. On the basis of "one zone, two parks" and through in-depth co-operation with Shenzhen, we will study the trial implementation of a cross-boundary policy on I&T co-operation in an innovative, exclusive and designated manner, covering the effective cross-boundary flow of innovation elements such as materials, data and talent between the two places. To chart Hong Kong in moving towards the vision of an international I&T centre, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government promulgated the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint in December last year to set out clear directions and major policies for the future I&T development in Hong Kong, among others, "to proactively integrate into the overall development of the country and consolidate our role as a bridge connecting the Mainland and the world".

The flow of innovation elements between the Mainland and Hong Kong is crucial to our I&T development. Not only will it facilitate our integration into the national innovation system, but also enhance our overall I&T competitiveness. In recent years, quite a number of important science and technology measures benefitting Hong Kong have been launched to facilitate the effective cross-boundary flow of innovation elements between the two places. In March this year, the HKSAR Government and the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) signed the "Arrangement between the Mainland and Hong Kong on Expediting the Development of Hong Kong into an International Innovation and Technology Centre", which is an important step in fostering the development of Hong Kong into an international I&T centre and marks a new page of scientific and technological collaboration between the Mainland and Hong Kong. The Arrangement covers six major co-operation areas, including deepening the scientific collaboration between the two places, sharing of innovation resources, transforming of research and development outcomes, exchange of talent, leveraging Hong Kong's advantages as an international city and strengthening the co-ordination of communication. It provides an action plan for promoting the I&T co-operation between the Mainland and Hong Kong and supports Hong Kong's development as an international I&T centre. The HKSAR Government will continue to actively dovetail with the MOST in relevant policy formulation for better co-ordination of communication among relevant departments in the Mainland and Hong Kong on matters such as I&T policies and resources, etc., and to rationalise relevant arrangements and formulate specific actions, with a view to promoting the effective implementation of the Arrangement and expediting the development of Hong Kong into an international I&T centre.

The HKSAR Government will continue to maintain close liaison with the relevant Central Government ministries and the Guangdong Provincial Government to actively explore measures to facilitate convenient cross-boundary flow of innovation elements. One of the measures which the HKSAR Government is actively striving for is the relaxation of the restriction on investment by Hong Kong enterprises in the development and application of human stem cells as well as genetic diagnosis and treatment technology in the negative list so as to allow more enterprises and experts from Hong Kong to participate in the related human genetic research in the Mainland. Currently, according to the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement, while Hong Kong service suppliers may set up healthcare institutions in the Mainland in the form of wholly-owned entity, or in the form of equity or contractual joint venture with Mainland's healthcare institutions or enterprises, they are not allowed to launch services on genetic information, blood collection, pathological data, etc. There are many outstanding scientific research institutions and enterprises in Hong Kong engaging in scientific research on advanced therapies as well as genetic diagnosis and treatment. With a view to promoting the industry development and encouraging more groundbreaking research and technological improvement, the HKSAR Government will continue to actively strive for opening up relevant businesses in the Mainland to Hong Kong scientific research institutions and enterprises. As it involves details of discussion with the Mainland, we will make announcement at suitable juncture.

LCQ21: Talent List

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Pui-leung and a written reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, in the Legislative Council today (June 28):

Question:

The Government announced in May this year the expanded Talent List (the List) that increases the coverage from the originally 13 to 51 professions and immediately applies to the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme, the General Employment Policy and the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals, with a view to attracting more high-quality talents to come to Hong Kong and meeting Hong Kong's development needs. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the respective numbers of applications for the aforesaid three talent admission schemes (i) received and (ii) approved by the authorities since the List was first drawn up in 2018, and set out in the table below a breakdown by profession on the List;

Profession on the List	(i)	(ii)
Total		

(2) whether the authorities have compiled statistics on the professional talents belonging to the professions on the List who have been approved to come to Hong Kong since the List was first drawn up in 2018, including their place of origin, gender, age, academic qualification and working experience, etc; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(3) of the longest, shortest and average processing time for the approved applications since the List was first drawn up in 2018; and

(4) whether it has reviewed if the number of talents admitted under the List in the past five years met the Government's expectations; how the Government gauges and assesses the effectiveness of the expanded List?

Reply:

President,

The purpose of drawing up the Talent List by the Government is to identify quality talents in need in Hong Kong that are in shortage and are difficult to be nurtured locally in a short time. The Talent List is applied under the relevant talent admission schemes to enable employers to recruit outside talents to meet their needs, in support of Hong Kong's development

into a high value-added and diversified economy. The Talent List has been applied to the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme (QMAS) since its first promulgation in 2018.

To proactively trawl for outside talents, the 2022 Policy Address announced that the application of the Talent List would be expanded and that the Talent List would be updated as soon as possible to reflect the latest shortage situation in various professions. The application of the Talent List has been extended to the General Employment Policy (GEP) and the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMP) since December 28, 2022. In addition, the Government has completed a review of the Talent List and the updated List was promulgated on May 16, 2023.

In consultation with the Immigration Department (ImmD), our reply to the Member's question is as follows:

(1) The number of applications that have met the eligibility criteria under the Talent List and the number of approved applications under the QMAS, the GEP and the ASMP during the period from 2018 to May 31, 2023, by categories of professions are tabulated as follows:

Profession	Number of applications that met eligibility criteria under Talent List (Note 1)	Number of applications approved
1. Professionals in Compliance in Asset Management (Note 2)/Professionals in Compliance in Asset and Wealth Management (Note 3)	13	12
2. Financial Professionals in Environmental, Social and Governance (Note 2)	6	6
3. Waste Treatment Specialists	4	4
4. Asset Management Professionals/Management Professionals in Asset and Wealth Management (Note 3)	77	76
5. Marine Insurance Professionals	9	9
6. Actuaries	7	7
7. Fintech Professionals/Professionals in Fintech	69	69

8. Data Scientists and Cyber Security Specialists/Cyber Security Specialists (Note 3)	59	59
9. Innovation and Technology Experts	66	65
10. Naval Architects	5	5
11. Marine Engineers and Superintendents of Ships/Marine Superintendents (Note 3)	12	12
12. Creative Industries and Performing Arts Professionals	30	30
13. Dispute Resolution Professionals and Transactional Lawyers	6	6
14. Arts Promoters (Note 3)	1	1
Total	364	361

Note 1: Applications under the QMAS have to pass the selection by the Advisory Committee on Admission of Quality Migrants and Professionals. Among the applications meeting the eligibility criteria under the Talent List, there were three outstanding applications under the QMAS pending for the discussion by the Advisory Committee.

Note 2: The professions were incorporated into the Talent List subsequent to the review in October 2021.

Note 3: The professions were incorporated into the updated Talent List with effect from May 16, 2023.

(2) The number of applications meeting the eligibility criteria under the Talent List approved under the QMAS, the GEP and the ASMTF during the period from 2018 to May 31, 2023, by region, sex, age, academic qualification and work experience of applicants are tabulated as follows:

Region	Number of applications approved (Note 4)
Mainland China (Note 5)	325
USA	10
Australia	4
Canada	3
Others	19
Total	361

Note 4: Figures under the QMAS denote the numbers of applications that passed the selection by the Advisory Committee.

Note 5: Including overseas Chinese nationals holding passports of the People's Republic of China.

Sex	Number of applications approved (Note 4)
Male	277
Female	84
Total	361

Note 4: Figures under the QMAS denote the numbers of applications that passed the selection by the Advisory Committee.

Age	Number of applications approved (Note 4)
18 to 39	235
40 to 44	71
45 to 50	36
51 or above	19
Total	361

Note 4: Figures under the QMAS denote the numbers of applications that passed the selection by the Advisory Committee.

Academic qualification	Number of applications approved under QMAS (Note 4)
Doctoral degree/two master's degrees or more	76
Master's degree/two bachelor's degrees or more	121
Bachelor's degree or equivalent	59
Other academic qualifications	0
Total	256

Note 4: Figures denote the numbers of applications that passed the selection by the Advisory Committee.

Work experience	Number of applications approved under QMAS (Note 4)
Not less than 10 years' graduate or specialist level work experience, including at least 5 years in a senior role	46

Not less than 5 years' graduate or specialist level work experience, including at least 2 years in a senior role	47
Not less than 5 years' graduate or specialist level work experience	143
Not less than 2 years' graduate or specialist level work experience	17
Less than 2 years' work experience	3
Total	256

Note 4: Figures denote the numbers of applications that passed the selection by the Advisory Committee.

Depending on the profession, the requirement of academic qualification and work experience for applicants varies under the GEP and the ASMTP. The ImmD does not maintain further classifications and other breakdown of statistics raised in the question.

(3) For applications for visas/entry permits under the GEP and the ASMTP, the assessment will normally be completed within four weeks upon submission of all the required information and supporting documents by the applicants.

The application process of the QMAS involves consultation with the Advisory Committee and other selection processes. The processing time will therefore be slightly longer and will vary depending on individual circumstances.

(4) The Government has not set a target for the expected number of applications involving the use of the Talent List. The updated Talent List covers more professions, and is expected to enable more quality talents to come to Hong Kong for work and development. The Government has set the key performance indicator (KPI) for the measures to trawl for talents, targeting to admit at least 35 000 talents annually with an intended duration of stay of at least 12 months through the talent admission schemes from 2023 to 2025. We will evaluate the overall effectiveness of the various talent attraction measures according to the KPI.