

## LCQ12: Sector-specific labour importation schemes

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

Question:

On the 13th of this month, the Government announced the sector-specific labour importation schemes under which the construction and transport sectors are allocated a quota of 12 000 and 8 000 respectively for importation of labour. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether the Government has a timetable for introducing sector-specific labour importation schemes for other sectors with acute manpower shortages (such as the tourism sector); if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) given that the Government has indicated that the sector-specific labour importation scheme for the construction sector should primarily apply to public sector construction works, and private sector construction works with special circumstances will also be considered, whether the Government has formulated a clear definition or guidelines for "special circumstances"; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(3) as some labour in foreign places have indicated that they do not know the details and application channels of the sector-specific labour importation schemes, whether the Government will step up publicity and promotion outside Hong Kong, so as to prevent labour in foreign places from being misled by unscrupulous labour service agencies; if so, of the details; and

(4) whether it will launch a one-stop online platform to enable practitioners of the relevant sectors and foreign job seekers to keep abreast of the latest recruitment information and application procedures, and provide answers to frequently asked questions; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Government is highly concerned about the supply and demand of manpower in Hong Kong. The Government's manpower policy has all along been giving priority to local workers. On the premise of ensuring the employment priority for local workers, the Government allows increasing the number of imported workers on an appropriate and regulated basis, with a view to alleviating the manpower shortage in individual sectors/job categories. The Government will also adopt a multi-pronged strategy, including promoting training and retraining, providing appropriate employment support services

and driving technology adoption for productivity uplifting, etc, so as to address the manpower shortage problem.

Having consulted the concerned bureaux, I provide a consolidated reply to the Member's question as follows:

(1) Various industries are currently facing an acute manpower shortage problem. Apart from the sector-specific labour importation schemes for the construction and transport sectors to be launched in July 2023 respectively by the Development Bureau (DEVB) and the Transport and Logistics Bureau, the Government will also enhance the coverage and operation of the existing Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS) to alleviate the manpower shortage in other sectors. Enhancement measures included suspending the general exclusion of the 26 job categories (see Annex) as well as unskilled/low-skilled posts from the SLS for two years; and enhancing dissemination of application information to employers, streamlining the procedures for processing the SLS applications and refining the workflow of consultation with the Labour Advisory Board. The Scheme will also be renamed as Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme.

(2) The Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector will accord priority to larger-scale public sector construction works exceeding a specified project value. Addressing the manpower needs of larger-scale public sector construction works can help release some local workers to other construction works, and alleviate the overall labour shortage of the construction sector.

While the DEVB believed that approved applications would mainly be public sector construction works, to provide reasonable flexibility, consideration will also be given to applications of private sector construction works with special circumstances, where the labour to be imported is of severe shortage in Hong Kong, such as construction personnel of special disciplines/trades, the local supply of which is very limited, e.g. mural painting artisans for conservation works of historical building.

(3) and (4) A thematic website will be launched for the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector to provide information related to the Scheme, such as application requirements and guidelines, links for downloading application forms and documents, leaflets, frequently asked questions, samples of completed applications, etc. The Construction Industry Council will also set up an enquiry hotline for interested applicants.

As far as the Labour Importation Scheme for the Transport Sector is concerned, the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) and the Transport Department (TD), as the executive bodies for handling applications relating to the aviation industry and the public light bus/coach trade respectively, will each arrange briefings for the relevant trades to introduce details of the Scheme, including application periods, application methods, eligibility criteria, terms and conditions of employment, Scheme requirements, documents required as well as other points to note. They will also upload relevant information on their thematic websites for reference by the trades and non-local workers. For any enquiries, the trades or non-local workers may also contact the AAHK and the TD by phone, email and/or fax.

The Labour Department (LD) planned to provide links to the thematic websites of sector-specific labour importation schemes on its homepage.

If the prospective imported workers are Mainland residents, employers must recruit the imported workers through the foreign labour service co-operation enterprises approved by the relevant Mainland authorities so as to protect the rights of these workers. Employers must also arrange imported workers to attend briefings on employment rights hosted by the LD, in which imported workers will obtain relevant information about employment rights and benefits as well as ways of making inquiries or filing complaints.

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## LCQ13: Provision of support for elderly singletons

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

Question:

According to the data in the 2021 Population Census, the number of domestic households with elderly persons aged 65 and above was about 1.02 million in 2021 and, among them, the proportion of elderly singletons to all domestic households with elderly persons was 18.5 per cent. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of households with elderly singletons aged 60 or above in public housing estates across the territory, with a breakdown by the age group of such households (i.e. aged 60 to 69, 70 to 79, 80 to 89, 90 to 99, and 100 or above);
- (2) of the number of members of elderly centres subsidised by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and, among them, the number of members who are elderly singletons; whether it has assessed the effectiveness of the services of such elderly centres;
- (3) of the current number of elderly singletons assessed by the Standardised Care Need Assessment Mechanism for Elderly Services as frail cases, with a breakdown by the age group of such elderly persons (i.e. aged 60 to 69, 70 to 79, 80 to 89, 90 to 99, and 100 or above);
- (4) of the respective current numbers of elderly singletons receiving various government cash benefits (including Comprehensive Social Security Assistance, Old Age Living Allowance, Old Age Allowance and Disability Allowance, etc.);
- (5) whether the Housing Department, the SWD (including the SWD-subsidised

elderly centres) and the Hospital Authority will consolidate the information on elderly singletons and establish an information sharing platform on elderly singleton households to improve the co-ordination among the relevant departments, thereby ensuring that every elderly singleton in need can receive welfare support; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(6) whether it will collaborate with the relevant departments to make use of gerontechnology to install home safety monitoring systems for elderly singletons, such as monitoring systems for bed exit and fall detection, so as to ensure that elderly singletons can receive timely rescue and assistance in case of home accidents, thereby preventing recurrence of incidents of failure to rescue which occurred frequently in recent years; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Housing Bureau and the Health Bureau, I provide a consolidated reply as follows:

(1) The age distribution of singleton elderly households aged 60 or above living in public rental housing units of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) as at end-March 2023 is as follows:

Age group	Number of singleton elderly households
60 to 69	55 229
70 to 79	40 888
80 to 89	19 879
90 to 99	5 645
100 or above	148
Total	121 789

(2) and (5) 213 District Elderly Community Centres (DECCs) and Neighbourhood Elderly Centres (altogether elderly centres) across the territory provide multiple support services to the elderly at the community level, including counselling, referral, assistance in making applications for long-term care services, emotional support and carer training. One of the tasks of the elderly centres is to reach out to and identify hidden or singleton elderly persons with potential needs through outreach services, in order to assist them to build a social life. The DECCs have set up support teams for the elderly (STEs). Not only do the STEs visit and assist the elderly with their personal needs, but they also develop volunteer programmes for the elderly to encourage them to participate in social affairs and serve the elderly in need, and to expand their social networks to give full play to the spirit of active ageing. In addition, the elderly centres establish a database of their service targets to gather and analyse information about the elderly in need in the districts for follow-up. As at end-March 2023, there were about 287

000 registered members in the elderly centres. Among them, the number of hidden and needy elderly cases being followed up was about 9 000.

At present, there are over 120 000 singleton elderly households living in public rental housing units under the HA. The Housing Department (HD) and the Social Welfare Department (SWD) have established an inter-departmental referral mechanism to handle special cases related to housing assistance for public rental housing tenants, and set up liaison groups at headquarters and district levels to hold regular meetings to review and improve the cooperation arrangements for housing assistance cases. Depending on the needs of the singleton elderly tenants, the HD may approve their relatives or domestic helpers to live temporarily in the units to facilitate care for the elderly tenants. If the elderly tenants have other needs, the HD will also refer the cases to the relevant government departments and/or agencies with their consent to assist them in receiving appropriate support services.

In 2021-22, the total number of inpatient discharges and deaths in the Hospital Authority was about 1 025 000. The Hospital Authority does not maintain separate data on hospital admissions and discharges of singleton elderly persons.

(3) As at end-March 2023, the numbers of frail elderly persons who received "home-based" Enhanced Home and Community Care Services/Integrated Home Care Services (Frail Cases) and "centre-based" day care centre services were about 13 000 and 5 000 respectively, and there were about 7 000 frail elderly persons using the Community Care Service Vouchers. According to the information gathered through the Standardised Care Need Assessment for Elderly Services, there were about 4 000 singleton elderly persons receiving the above-mentioned services with a breakdown by age group as follows:

Age group	Enhanced Home and Community Care Services/Integrated Home Care Services (Frail Cases)	Day Care Centres/Units for the Elderly	Community Care Service Voucher Scheme for the Elderly	Total
60 to 69	211	31	130	372
70 to 79	653	88	277	1 018
80 to 89	1 241	184	496	1 921
90 to 99	618	77	182	877
100 or above	12	2	5	19
Total	2 735	382	1 090	4 207

(4) As at end-March 2023, there were about 55 000 singleton Comprehensive Social Security Assistance recipients aged 65 or above who were not living at residential care homes.

The Social Security Allowance Scheme comprises the Old Age Living Allowance, the Old Age Allowance and the Disability Allowance, etc. Recipients are generally not required to declare whether they are living with family members. Accordingly, the SWD does not maintain the number of singleton elderly recipients.

(6) The HA and the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) provide subsidies to eligible elderly households living in public rental housing estates under their management for the installation and use of an emergency call system to enable singleton elderly persons to seek assistance promptly in case of emergency. The SWD also provides a similar allowance to elderly recipients of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance.

The HA and the HKHS are committed to promoting ageing in place and have implemented various support programmes in their public rental housing estates or elderly housing projects for such purpose.

Considering that elderly tenants may need to modify the facilities in their units to cope with their daily living activities, the HA may, upon application, carry out free adaptation or modification works in their public rental housing units, including installation of ramps at the entrance of the units, widening of bathroom doorways, conversion of bathtubs into shower cubicles, addition of handrails in bathrooms, etc., where practicable.

Since 2012, the HKHS has also started to provide support services for the elderly in rental housing estates to cater for their housing, physical and mental health, and social needs, including free home assessments and retrofitting works for elderly residents in need.

In addition, the HKHS' Senior Citizen Residences (SEN) Scheme provides middle-income seniors aged 60 or above with age-friendly units, integrated one-stop healthcare services and recreation facilities, residential care homes for the elderly, etc. The HKHS has thus far launched three SEN projects, namely Jolly Place, Cheerful Court and Blissful Place, providing a total of 888 units. The units under the SEN Scheme are designed with various gerontechnology and safety features, such as the "integrated care link system", non-slippery floor tiles and handrails, individual emergency alarm, non-flame cooking equipment, etc.

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**Special traffic arrangements for race**

# meeting in Happy Valley

Special traffic arrangements will be implemented in Happy Valley today (June 28). The arrangements will come into effect one and a half hours before the start of the first race and will last until the crowds have dispersed after the race meeting.

## A. Traffic arrangements before the commencement of the first race

### 1. Road closure

Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the up-ramp outside the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) will be closed except for vehicles heading for Aberdeen Tunnel.

### 2. Traffic diversions

- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and the up-ramp outside HKJC will be re-routed one way northbound;
- Traffic along eastbound Queen's Road East heading for Wan Chai and Happy Valley will be diverted to turn left to Morrison Hill Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Traffic along Queen's Road East cannot turn right to Wong Nai Chung Road except for vehicles heading for Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Queen's Road East will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Morrison Hill Road to turn right at the junction of Wong Nai Chung Road and Queen's Road East; and
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley or Racecourse will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, southbound Morrison Hill Road, Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road.

## B. Traffic arrangements before the conclusion of race meeting

### 1. Road closure

The following roads will be closed from about 35 minutes before the start of the last race:

- The up-ramp on Wong Nai Chung Road outside HKJC leading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the up-ramp leading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and the Public Stands of HKJC;
- Westbound Leighton Road between Wong Nai Chung Road and Canal Road East; and
- Southbound Morrison Hill Road between Leighton Road and Queen's Road East.

In addition, southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between the up-ramp

leading to Aberdeen Tunnel and the Public Stands of HKJC will be closed from about 10 minutes before the start of the last race.

## 2. Traffic diversions

Â Â Â Â The following traffic diversions will be implemented from about 35 minutes before the start of the last race:

- Eastbound Queen’s Road East at its junction with Morrison Hill Road will be reduced to one-lane traffic heading for northbound Canal Road flyover;
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Wan Chai will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, U-turn slip road beneath Canal Road flyover, Canal Road West and Hennessy Road;
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road will be diverted to turn left to eastbound Leighton Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road; and
- Traffic along westbound Leighton Road will be diverted to Wong Nai Chung Road.

## C. Learner drivers prohibition

Â Â Â Â Learner drivers will be prohibited to turn left from Caroline Hill Road to Leighton Road between one and a half hours before the start of the first race and one hour after the last race. In addition, learner drivers will be prohibited from accessing the following roads within the above period of time:

- Shan Kwong Road between Yik Yam Street and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Village Road between its upper and lower junctions with Shan Kwong Road;
- Percival Street between Hennessy Road and Leighton Road;
- Canal Road East; and
- The service road leading from Gloucester Road to Canal Road flyover.

## D. Suspension of parking spaces

Â Â Â Â Parking spaces on southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Sports Road and Blue Pool Road will be suspended from 11am to 7pm during day racing, from 4.30pm to 11.59pm during evening racing, and from 5pm to 11.59pm during night racing.

Â Â Â Â Any vehicles found illegally parked within the precincts of the above affected areas will be towed away without prior notice.

Â Â Â Â Actual implementation of road closure and traffic diversion will be made by the Police at the time depending on traffic conditions in the areas. Motorists should exercise tolerance and patience, and follow the instructions of Police on site.

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## Red flags hoisted at some beaches

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (June 28) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Shek O Beach and Big Wave Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island; and Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

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## Auction of personalised vehicle registration marks to be held on July 16

The Transport Department (TD) today (June 28) announced that auction of personalised vehicle registration marks (PVRMs) will be held on July 16 (Sunday) at Meeting Room S221, L2, Old Wing, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wan Chai.

"A total of 240 approved PVRMs will be put up for public auction. A list of the marks has been uploaded to the department's website, [www.td.gov.hk/en/public\\_services/vehicle\\_registration\\_mark/index.html](http://www.td.gov.hk/en/public_services/vehicle_registration_mark/index.html)," a department spokesman said.

The reserve price of each of these marks is \$5,000. Applicants who have paid a deposit of \$5,000 should also participate in the bidding (including the first bid at the reserve price). Otherwise, the PVRM concerned may be sold to another bidder at the reserve price.

People who wish to participate in the bidding at the auction should take note of the following points:

(1) Bidders are required to produce the following documents for completion of registration and payment procedures immediately after successful bidding:

(i) the identity document of the successful bidder;

(ii) the identity document of the purchaser (if the purchaser and the successful bidder are different persons);  
(iii) a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation (if the purchaser is a body corporate); and  
(iv) a crossed cheque made payable to "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" or "The Government of the HKSAR". For an auctioned mark paid for by cheque, the first three working days after the date of auction will be required for cheque clearance confirmation before processing of the application for mark assignment can be completed. Successful bidders may also pay through the Easy Pay System (EPS), but are reminded to note the maximum transfer amount in the same day of the payment card. Payment by post-dated cheque, cash, credit card or other methods will not be accepted.

(2) Purchasers must make payment of the purchase price through EPS or by crossed cheque and complete the Memorandum of Sale of PVRM immediately after the bidding. Subsequent alteration of the particulars in the Memorandum will not be permitted.

(3) A PVRM can only be assigned to a motor vehicle which is registered in the name of the purchaser. The Certificate of Incorporation must be produced immediately by the purchaser if a vehicle registration mark purchased is to be registered under the name of a body corporate.

(4) The display of a PVRM on a motor vehicle should be in compliance with the requirements stipulated in Schedule 4 of the Road Traffic (Registration and Licensing of Vehicles) Regulations.

(5) Any change to the arrangement of letters, numerals and blank spaces of a PVRM, i.e. single and two rows as auctioned, will not be allowed.

(6) The purchaser shall, within 12 months after the date of auction, apply to the Commissioner for Transport for the PVRM to be assigned to a motor vehicle registered in the name of the purchaser. If the purchaser fails to assign the PVRM within 12 months, allocation of the PVRM will be cancelled and arranged for re-allocation in accordance with the statutory provision without prior notice to the purchaser.

"Upon completion of the Memorandum of Sale of PVRM, the purchaser will be issued a receipt and a Certificate of Allocation of Personalised Registration Mark. The Certificate of Allocation will serve to prove the holdership of the PVRM. Potential buyers of vehicles bearing a PVRM should check the Certificate of Allocation with the sellers and pay attention to the details therein. For transfer of vehicle ownership, this certificate together with other required documents should be sent to the TD for processing," the spokesman added.

For other auction details, please refer to the Guidance Notes – Auction of PVRMs, which is available at the department's licensing offices or can be downloaded from its website,  
[www.td.gov.hk/en/public\\_services/vehicle\\_registration\\_mark/pvr\\_m\\_auction/index](http://www.td.gov.hk/en/public_services/vehicle_registration_mark/pvr_m_auction/index)

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