

Public urged to report flooding

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

Members of the public are advised to report any street flooding that comes to their notice to the Drainage Services Department by calling the 24-hour drainage hotline on 2300 1110.

Transcript of remarks of press conference on importation of labour (with photo/video)

The Deputy Financial Secretary, Mr Michael Wong, held a press conference on the Government's measures on importation of labour this afternoon (June 13). The Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Lam Sai-hung; the Secretary for Development, Ms Bernadette Linn; the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun; the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Ms Mable Chan; the Permanent Secretary for Development (Works), Mr Ricky Lau; and the Deputy Commissioner for Labour (Labour Administration), Mr Raymond Ho, also attended. Following is the transcript of remarks of the press conference:

Reporter: Good afternoon. Firstly, we want to ask a little bit more about the timeline. When will the Government expect this new imported labour scheme to start? When would these 20 000 people be expected to arrive in Hong Kong to start their work? And also, we'd like to clarify a little bit more about the targeted imported labour, whether the Government is only targeting to import labour from the Mainland? Or is it also open to people from other regions as well? And, whether these imported labour will be granted permanent residency in the future? Is there any possibility for that and what's the Government's rationale? And lastly, whether the Government has any plans to expand the currently allowed quotas for these imported labour in the future? Would it cover other sectors as well?

Deputy Financial Secretary: First of all, regarding the timing, for the two sector-specific schemes, we look forward to receiving applications in July. So, in a few weeks' time. We hope to be able to complete processing applications within about two months. That's our pledge. For the enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme, because the number of job categories is more, we

look forward to starting receiving applications within the third quarter. So, it's before September. To be able to process the applications, the current timeline is about five months. We hope to be able to shorten it to around three months.

We don't expect to fully utilise the quota in the first year, so it will be a progressive process, but we do believe that the quotas may be fully utilised sometime next year. The schemes are not just open to Mainland workers. But our experience in the past has been that it will mainly be Mainland workers because of the geographic proximity and convenience.

With regard to residency, while they are in Hong Kong, they will be non-permanent Hong Kong residents. The situation is quite similar to other imported workers under the current Supplementary Labour Scheme, so their status would not change from non-permanent Hong Kong residents to permanent Hong Kong residents. In other words, after they finish their work contracts in Hong Kong, they will leave.

We do not have any specific predictions about future developments. We will monitor the situation closely. We will look at the need of our economy. We will also look at the impact of the various new arrangements and new schemes before determining the next steps.

Reporter: I'd like to ask if you have a ballpark estimate for the total number of additional foreign workers allowed under the quota? And for the ESLS, will there be an expanded quota or will it still be on a first-come, first-served basis? And when will you evaluate if you will further extend that after two years?

Deputy Financial Secretary: On the three sector-specific schemes, including the one for care workers that's already in place, when the quotas are all fully utilised, we'll be talking about 27 000 imported workers. So that's when the quotas are all fully utilised.

Reporter: Are 27 000 workers more than previous years?

Deputy Financial Secretary: I wouldn't say that. It's hard to compare that way. Under the three schemes, together, the total quota stands at 27 000. And as I said before, we do not expect the quotas to be all fully utilised within the next few months. So it will be sometime next year. But then of course, we have to look at the market situation very carefully.

Your other question pertains to the ESLS (Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme). For that, basically each application that comes in will have to be critically evaluated by colleagues from our Labour Department. For that scheme, we do not have an upper limit. But if you look at what actually happened in the past, for the time being, the number of workers imported under the Supplementary Labour Scheme, if we excluded the care worker sector, we're talking about between 1 000 and 2 000. So it's not that many.

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



[CHP appeals to public to take precautionary measures against carbon monoxide and pesticide poisoning](#)

Following the notification from the Hospital Authority yesterday (June 12) on two clusters of poisoning cases involving carbon monoxide and pesticide poisoning respectively, the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (June 13) appealed to members of the public to take relevant precautionary measures.

The cluster of carbon monoxide poisoning cases involved two males and one female aged between 45 and 60, who complained of nausea, dizziness, generalised weakness and loss of consciousness when a plumbing work on a blocked drain was carried out in a village house on June 11. They were sent to North District Hospital subsequently and were transferred to Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital (PYNEH) for treatment on the same day. The two male patients have been discharged after treatment while the female patient is still hospitalised but in stable condition. A preliminary investigation revealed that a fuel-driven machine was used indoor during the plumbing work by the two male patients and the area was not well-ventilated.

The cluster of pesticide poisoning cases involved three household members. They are a 30-year-old woman, a 16-year-old girl and a 14-year-old boy, who complained of nausea and vomiting on June 12 after being exposed to a pesticide at home since June 11. All of them attended Ruttonjee Hospital on June 12. The woman did not require admission but the children were transferred to PYNEH for treatment on the same day. They are in stable condition. A preliminary investigation revealed that the household had used a pesticide purchased outside Hong Kong at home and the active ingredients of the pesticide included aluminium phosphide.

The CHP has referred both clusters to relevant departments for follow-up.

The CHP said that carbon monoxide is a colourless, odourless and tasteless gas which is a by-product from incomplete combustion of any fuel

which contains carbon. Exposure to a low concentration of carbon monoxide can lead to a range of symptoms such as dizziness, headache, tiredness and nausea; whereas exposure to a high concentration of carbon monoxide can lead to impaired vision, disturbed co-ordination, unconsciousness, brain damage or even death. The CHP reminded members of the public that fuel-driven tools should only be used properly in a well-ventilated area. People should seek medical attention immediately if suspected of developing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Separately, aluminium phosphide can release phosphine gas upon contact with moisture or moist air. Inhalation of phosphine gas can cause symptoms including nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, arrhythmia, hypotension, acute kidney injury etc. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department advises members of the public to choose only registered pesticides with proper Chinese and English labels. Members of the public should always refer to the instructions on the labels and take necessary precautions when using registered pesticides. They should seek medical attention immediately if feeling unwell after using pesticides.

Imported chilled chicken sample detected with enrofloxacin exceeding legal limit

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (June 13) that a sample of imported chilled chicken was found with excessive enrofloxacin, a veterinary drug residue. The CFS is following up on the incident.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS collected the above-mentioned chilled chicken sample at import level for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that the sample contained enrofloxacin at a level of 190 parts per billion (ppb), exceeding the legal limit of 100 ppb. The CFS has informed the importer concerned of the irregularity. According to the information provided by the importer, the products concerned have sold out. The CFS is also tracing the source and distribution of the products concerned.

"According to the detected level of the veterinary drug residue found in the sample concerned, normal consumption is unlikely to pose adverse health effects," the spokesman added.

According to the Harmful Substances in Food Regulations (Cap. 132AF), muscle of poultry sold in Hong Kong for human consumption is not allowed to contain enrofloxacin exceeding the level of 100 ppb per kilogram of the food.

Offenders will be prosecuted and will be liable to a fine of \$50,000 and to imprisonment for six months upon conviction.

The CFS has informed the Mainland authorities, and will continue to follow up and take appropriate action. An investigation is ongoing.

[Commissioner of Customs and Excise visits Hunan and attends launching ceremony of Hunan-Guangdong-Hong Kong Single E-lock Scheme \(with photos\)](#)

The Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Ms Louise Ho, began her two-day visit to Hunan Province today (June 13).

In the morning, Ms Ho attended the launching ceremony of the Hunan-Guangdong-Hong Kong Single E-lock Scheme in Changsha. In her speech, Ms Ho said that Hunan is the supply base of agricultural products in the country and the extension of the Scheme to Hunan can further promote Hunan's agricultural and various kinds of products to overseas markets, consolidate Hong Kong's position as an international logistics centre, and create a win-win situation for trade between the two places.

Ms Ho later called on the Executive Vice-Governor of Hunan Province, Mr Li Dianxun, and the Director General in Changsha Customs District, Mr Zhu Guangyao, respectively and expressed her gratitude for their dedicated support and co-ordination to extend the Scheme to Hunan. They also exchanged views on leveraging the development opportunities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) and deepening the co-operation between the two Customs administrations. Ms Ho added that Hong Kong Customs proactively participates in the development of the GBA, and is committed to promoting the integration of logistics between the two places with the Mainland Customs. Making full use of the infrastructure and transportation networks of Hong Kong International Airport and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge will also strengthen intermodal transshipment, foster the development of cold chain logistics services, and promote Hunan's high-quality fresh products to the world.

Hunan is the second Mainland province to implement the Single E-lock Scheme after Guangdong Province since 2016. Under the Scheme, duplicated inspection of the same consignment by the two Customs administrations is reduced with an aim to streamline the clearance process, expedite the flow of cargo transshipment, and expand the realm of co-operation in logistics industry between both sides.

On the same day, Ms Ho visited the Changsha Customs District and the Yueyang Customs House, and toured the Monitoring Command Centre of Changsha Customs District and the Yueyang Chenglingji Port, to learn about the latest logistics developments.

Ms Ho tomorrow (June 14) will visit the Shaoshan Customs House and have an in-depth exchange with officials on issues such as promoting customs clearance and trade. She will return to Hong Kong on the evening of the same day.



