

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (February 28) released the latest grading of water quality for six gazetted beaches that are open all year round for swimming.

Five beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1), and one as Fair (Grade 2).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Casam Beach	Golden Beach
Clear Water Bay Second Beach	Lido Beach
Deep Water Bay Beach	

Grade 2 beach is:

Silverstrand Beach

Compared with the grading released last week, Silverstrand Beach has been changed from Grade 1 to Grade 2.

"The changes are generally within the normal range of fluctuation of the bacteriological water quality of the beaches," an EPD spokesman said.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades, namely Good (Grade 1), Fair (Grade 2), Poor (Grade 3) and Very Poor (Grade 4), according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, the EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a tropical cyclone or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the EPD's website on Beach Water Quality (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666. Members of the public can also obtain the latest daily water quality forecast information for all beaches that are open for swimming through the EPD's dedicated webpage on the beach water quality forecast (www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQForecast).

Appeal for information on missing man in Ma On Shan (with photo)

Police today (February 28) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Ma On Shan.

Tsang Cheuk-wing, aged 34, went missing after he was last seen at a unit on Ning Tai Road on January 29 afternoon. His family made a report to Police today.

He is about 1.73 metres tall, 73 kilograms in weight and of medium build. He has a square face with yellow complexion and short black hair. He was last seen wearing a black shirt, blue jeans and white sports shoes.

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 South on 3661 1176 or 9415 4495 or email to rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.



LegCo Secretariat releases Policy

Pulse on “Hong Kong’s legal and dispute resolution services”

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) Secretariat (the Secretariat) today (February 28) released a Policy Pulse on "Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services". This issue provides a concise overview of the unique advantages of Hong Kong's legal services and its latest developments in arbitration and mediation services. It also covers the Government's policy initiatives to promote LawTech, as well as relevant discussions in LegCo along with recommendations by Members.

Under "one country, two systems", Hong Kong is the only common law jurisdiction in the country. In addition, the laws of Hong Kong are bilingual in Chinese and English, and are highly aligned with international trade and investment rules, making the city the preferred destination for international and Mainland institutions seeking international legal and arbitration services. The Policy Pulse highlighted the strengths of Hong Kong's legal services, including a deep pool of legal talents who have extensive experience in international legal services and are familiar with national policies, as well as world-renowned arbitration services. Moreover, the headquarters of the International Organization for Mediation (IOMed) will formally establish in Hong Kong by the end of this year at the earliest, manifesting the city's unique advantages in international mediation. This also demonstrates the nation's staunch support in establishing the strategic positioning of Hong Kong as a regional centre for international legal and dispute resolution services under the National 14th Five-Year Plan and the Outline Development Plan for Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA).

LegCo strongly supports the development of Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services. The Policy Pulse summarized the relevant work of LegCo, including the Finance Committee's approval of funding proposal last year for the conversion of the Old Wan Chai Police Station into the IOMed headquarters, and the monitoring of the project's progress to ensure its timely completion. Members also urged the Government to foster the development and industrialization of maritime arbitration, and expedite the establishment of a sports dispute resolution system. Furthermore, Members suggested the Government to provide mediation training for appropriate persons in the district to encourage them to resolve community disputes through mediation, and to foster the mediation culture in the community with a view to building a harmonious and stable society.

A Bills Committee has been formed in LegCo to scrutinize the Courts (Remote Hearing) Bill. The Bill aims to promote the use of technology in the Judiciary, enabling the courts to better tackle unforeseen and complicated situations such as pandemics. Members also suggested leveraging the

experience of the Electronic Business Related Arbitration and Mediation (eBRAM) Platform, which was developed with the Administration's facilitation and listed by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), to promote online dispute resolution services to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and "Belt and Road" countries. This would further consolidate Hong Kong's role as an electronic arbitration and mediation platform for the "Belt and Road" markets.

Members also suggested that the Government officials step up efforts to promote the new measures of "allowing Hong Kong-invested enterprises to adopt Hong Kong law" and "allowing Hong Kong-invested enterprises to choose for arbitration to be seated in Hong Kong" in the Second Agreement Concerning Amendment to the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) Agreement on Trade in Services, with a view to promoting Hong Kong's role as a "super connector" and a "super value-adder" between the Mainland and the rest of the world. This would enable Hong Kong to give full play to its strengths in legal and dispute resolution services and facilitate the high-quality development of GBA.

The detailed content of "Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services" is available on the LegCo Website. The [Policy Pulse](#), published by the LegCo Secretariat, covers specific topics, offers a comprehensive overview of related policy developments and summarizes key discussions in LegCo.

Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step

up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on February 27 to noon today (February 28), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 278 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category. No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan"

(www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 50 samples of local catch for radiological levels. All the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website (www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html).

From August 24, 2023, to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 119 045 samples of food imported from Japan (including 78 084 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 27 526 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

Hawker convicted of illegal hawking and selling restricted food without permission

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (February 28) urged the public not to patronise unlicensed hawkers. The department said that a woman was arrested during a blitz enforcement operation against unlicensed hawkers and shop front extensions conducted earlier in Tuen Mun. She was caught selling food from unknown sources and selling restricted food without permission. The court recently convicted her of illegal hawking, obstructing public places and selling restricted food without permission, fining her \$5,000. The FEHD reaffirmed its commitment to relentlessly curbing unlicensed hawking activities, particularly when it involves food sales.

The FEHD spokesman said, "The department has been conducting blitz operations across multiple districts to combat illegal hawkers selling food from unknown sources or expired food. Seized items include bread, cakes, meat, Lunar New Year specialties, and expired food, such as instant noodles and other dried food. Offending hawkers have been charged in accordance with relevant legislation. So far, 22 relevant cases have been adjudicated, with all defendants convicted and fined by the court."

The spokesman stressed, "In general, FEHD staff would exercise leniency toward elderly or disabled hawkers. However, when food safety is at risk – such as with food of unknown origin or expired food – strict measures, including immediate arrests without prior warning, are enforced. These efforts will persist, and no one should defy the law."

The spokesman reminded members of the public, "Consuming food from unknown sources and expired food, particularly high-risk food such as meat, sashimi and sushi, may pose serious food safety hazards. We urge the public not to buy from illegal hawkers and to report suspicious food sales to the FEHD for prompt action."

According to the relevant ordinances, unlicensed hawking is subject to a maximum fine of \$10,000 and six months' imprisonment. If unlicensed hawking activities also cause obstruction of passageways, offenders may be fined \$25,000 or imprisoned for three months. In addition, any person who sells restricted food (including frozen meat, sashimi and sushi) without permission or sells expired food commits an offence and is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment upon conviction.

The FEHD called on members of the public to jointly safeguard food safety and environmental hygiene.