

Enhancements to the compensation arrangements for landowners and business operators affected by land resumption and clearance projects of the Government

The Development Bureau announced today (May 3) that the compensation arrangements for landowners and business operators affected by land resumption and clearance projects of the Government would be enhanced.

The Government has been stepping up its efforts on land resumption in recent years to meet community's needs for land supply and implement various community enhancement projects. The society has all along expected the Government to address the concerns of the affected persons in a fair and reasonable manner when taking forward land resumption and clearance and allow the relevant work to proceed smoothly.

In mid-2018, the Government announced enhancements on the ex-gratia compensation and rehousing arrangements focusing on squatter households and business operators. Thereafter, the Government has continued to listen to views from different quarters. Upon review, it was considered that there is a need to rationalise the compensation arrangement for landowners which was not covered in the last exercise, and to adjust, with reference to the operational experience in the past few years, the approval criteria of the ex-gratia allowance (EGA) newly introduced in mid-2018 for outdoor business operators.

The enhancements include:

- (1) in respect of the ex-gratia compensation for landowners, to merge the four zones under the "Ex-gratia Zonal Compensation System" (Zonal System) into two zones, namely the "Tier One zone" (applicable to land required for development uses, such as New Development Areas (NDAs), residential, economic development uses, and related public facilities) with the compensation amount set at the Zone A rate under the existing system, and the "Tier Two zone" (applicable to land required for non-development uses, including rural improvement and conservation uses) with the compensation amount set at half of that of the "Tier One zone";
- (2) in respect of EGA for outdoor business operators, to modify the minimum operation duration required of a business operator under the "EGA for Open-air/Outdoor Business Undertakings" from not less than seven years preceding the date on which the Government conducted the freezing survey to not less than two years, and to remove the payment ceiling on open areas that could be taken into account in calculating the EGA amount (currently each business

undertaking may receive EGA for open areas not exceeding 5 000 square metres), but the Lands Department would reserve its right to deduct the area which is not genuinely used for operation when calculating the EGA amount in dubious cases in future.

A spokesman for the Development Bureau said, "In respect of ex-gratia compensation for landowners, the use of two different tiers of compensation rate for resuming land for public housing projects within and outside of NDAs has been of particular concern to landowners and stakeholders in the past. A Zonal System with compensation arrangements delineated by development uses and non-development uses can reflect the nature of the land resumption project in a more appropriate and more concise manner."

Under the two-tier Zonal System in future, owners of land resumed for development uses outside NDAs will receive the same Tier One rate as in development projects within NDAs, representing a 60 per cent increase over the Zone B rate normally receivable for development projects outside NDAs before the merging of the compensation zones. Owners of land resumed for non-development uses will receive Tier Two rate, representing a 20 per cent increase over the Zone C rate normally receivable for rural improvement works in the past.

As for the situation of outdoor business operators, the spokesman said that the original approval criteria of the EGA might have prevented some of the affected businesses from receiving pertinent monetary assistance to cope with their removal expenses and the impact caused by land resumption and clearance. The shortened minimum operation duration preceding the date of the freezing survey will align with the minimum residence duration applicable to squatter households for receiving cash EGAs, while the relaxation on the ceiling on the open areas that could be taken into account in calculating the EGA amount is to reflect the circumstances of individual business operators.

The spokesman said: "This round of enhancement measures serve to rationalise the existing regime, which are very important to the future land resumption cum clearance and land development work, which, having balanced the considerations on the use of public resources, seek to respond to the needs and aspirations of the affected persons in a reasonable manner."

The spokesman continued, "The said ex-gratia compensation and EGA are alternative options to statutory compensation to provide landowners and business operators with a streamlined and speedier means to handle compensation matters. Relevant persons can still opt for individual assessment of the compensation amount via the statutory compensation route if they so wish."

The Development Bureau will brief the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Development on May 10 and plan to seek approval from the Legislative Council Finance Committee on the above enhancement measures in late May or early June. If approved, implementation of the enhancements will be backdated to today (i.e. May 3, 2022).

Moreover, the Government has also taken this opportunity to update two parameters in the formula for regular adjustment (normally every six months) of the compensation amount under the Zonal System. All along, the zonal compensation amount has been adjusted by the formula bi-annually in accordance with changes in the land values of developed land within new towns. The Government will, on top of the three new towns originally represented in the formula (Sha Tin, Tuen Mun, Tsuen Wan), add two major existing new towns within the catchment of the Northern Metropolis (Yuen Long, Fanling & Sheung Shui), and rebase the weightings of the land value of different categories of land according to the latest land use mix in the five new towns (based on the prevailing applicable Outline Zoning Plans), with a view to ensuring the parameters in the formula would keep up with the times.

For details of the various measures above, please refer to the LegCo Brief issued today.

The enhancement measures announced in mid-2018 introduced a new non-means-tested rehousing option provided by the Hong Kong Housing Society for eligible squatter households, and relaxed the eligibility criteria and level of the EGA for eligible squatter households. After implementation, the measures have significantly improved the rehousing prospect of affected households, and allow more households the chance to receive the EGA and at higher amounts to assist them in coping with difficulties in relocation. The spokesman of the Development Bureau said, "For the major development clearance projects in recent years, out of the households which have completed eligibility assessment, around 65 per cent were allocated rehousing units (while major reasons of households being ineligible for rehousing include: the structures resided were unauthorised without any survey registration records, the households own domestic property in Hong Kong, the households are existing tenants of public housing, inability of the households to prove residence within the development area, etc), of which around 70 per cent were rehoused through the new non-means-tested rehousing option. We will continue to adhere to our 'people-oriented' philosophy and do our best in explaining our policies and carrying out the processing work for rehousing and compensation."

Senior appointment (with photo)

The Government announced today (May 3) that Mr Brian Lo Sai-hung, formerly Director-General of Trade and Industry, has taken up the post of Director of Administration on May 3, 2022.

The Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Patrick Nip, said, "Mr Lo is a seasoned Administrative Officer with proven leadership and management skills. I have every confidence that he will serve with professionalism in his new capacity."

A brief biographical note of Mr Lo is set out below:

Mr Brian Lo Sai-hung

Mr Lo joined the Administrative Service in August 1989 and rose to the rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade A in April 2021. He has served in various bureaux and departments, including the former City and New Territories Administration, the former Trade and Industry Branch, the former University and Polytechnic Grants Committee, the former Trade Department, the former Transport Bureau, the Innovation and Technology Commission, the former Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau, the Civil Service Bureau and the Trade and Industry Department. He was Deputy Secretary for Education from July 2014 to July 2018, Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service from July 2018 to August 2020 and has been serving as Director-General of Trade and Industry since August 2020.



[CE-elect's Office set to ensure smooth transition \(with photo\)](#)

The Government announced today (May 3) that the Office of the Chief Executive-elect (CE-elect) has been established to ensure a smooth transition to the new term of government.

The CE-elect's Office will support the CE-elect in undertaking major tasks including forming a governing team for the new term of Government; preparing for drawing up a policy plan for the new government based on the

CE-elect's election manifesto; making arrangements with the incumbent government for a smooth transition including major events relating to the celebration of the 25th anniversary of Hong Kong's return to the Motherland, and liaising with different sectors of the community and participating in various official activities.

"The CE-elect's Office is now ready to commence operation. The CE-elect's Office will have five posts at directorate level and over 20 at non-directorate levels. The Government has deployed civil servants to fill four directorate posts, including the Secretary-General of the CE-elect's Office, the Private Secretary, Deputy Private Secretary and Press Secretary to the CE-elect," a government spokesman said.

The CE-elect's Office is housed in the Immigration Tower at Gloucester Road, Wanchai, on the 26th floor. It will formally commence operation on the day the sixth-term CE is elected and will cease to operate by June 30, 2022.

Mr Daniel Cheng Chung-wai, formerly Director of Administration, assumed the post of Secretary-General (designate), CE-elect's Office today.

Commenting on the appointment, the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Patrick Nip, said, "Mr Cheng is a seasoned Administrative Officer with rich experience in public administration. I believe that he will serve with professionalism in the new capacity to ensure a smooth transition to the new term of government."

A brief biographical note on Mr Cheng is as follows:

Mr Daniel Cheng Chung-wai

Mr Cheng joined the Administrative Service in July 1989 and rose to the rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1 in April 2018. He has served in various bureaux and departments, including the former Finance Branch, the former City and New Territories Administration, the former Health and Welfare Branch, the former Trade and Industry Branch, the Office of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in Beijing, the former Planning and Lands Bureau, the former Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau and the former Education and Manpower Bureau. He was Deputy Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs from July 2010 to September 2016, Deputy Secretary for Food and Health (Food) from September 2016 to July 2020, and has been serving as Director of Administration since July 2020.



Government enforces “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Block 4, Serenity Place, Tseung Kwan O

The Government yesterday (May 2) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" effective from 4pm yesterday, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Tseung Kwan O (i.e. Block 4, Serenity Place, Tseung Kwan O) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained.

In addition, the Government issued a compulsory testing notice yesterday to any person who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from April 26 to May 2, 2022, to undergo compulsory testing on or before May 4, 2022, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect. The Government finished the compulsory testing exercise at around 8am today (May 3) and is now carrying out enforcement actions in the "restricted area" to verify that all people in the "restricted area" have undergone compulsory testing. The Government will

further announce the revocation time of the declaration.

Starting from around 8am today, persons in the "restricted area" in Tseung Kwan O who have undergone testing and are able to present SMS notifications with negative test results as proof of having undergone testing may leave the "restricted area" through the designated exit after providing personal information to a prescribed officer.

The Government set up temporary specimen collection stations in the "restricted area" yesterday and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to collect combined nasal and throat swab samples at the stations to undergo a COVID-19 virus test before 9pm yesterday. About 790 people within the area had undergone testing, among which two cases tested positive and one indeterminate case were found. The Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will arrange to follow up.

The Government provided food packs for persons subject to compulsory testing so as to facilitate the meal arrangements of persons subject to compulsory testing. Rapid antigen test kits, as well as anti-epidemic proprietary Chinese medicines supplied by the Central People's Government, were also provided to persons subject to compulsory testing to help them fight against the virus.

Moreover, the Government also assigned staff to visit 328 households in the "restricted area", among which 34 households did not answer the door. The Government will take measures to follow up.

The Government reiterates that enforcement actions will be taken seriously. Any person who fails to present an SMS notification with a test result as proof of having undergone testing breaches the compulsory testing notice and may be liable to a fine of \$10,000. The person will also be issued with a compulsory testing order, requiring him/her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the compulsory testing order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender may be liable to a fine of level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Missing woman in Aberdeen located

A woman who went missing in Aberdeen has been located.

Sou Man-i, aged 41, went missing after she left her residence at Wah Fu (II) Estate on April 30 noon. Her family made a report to Police on the same day.

The woman was located at a sports ground on Po Hong Road in Tseung Kwan O yesterday (May 2) morning. She sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.