

## **Government announces re-appointment of HKTDC Chairman**

The Government announced today (May 14) that Dr Peter Lam Kin-ngok has been re-appointed as Chairman of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) for a term of two years with effect from June 1, 2021.

Commenting on the re-appointment, the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, said, "Under Dr Lam's leadership since June 2019, the HKTDC has successfully assisted Hong Kong companies in developing the Mainland and overseas markets amid numerous challenges, especially in seizing business opportunities arising from the nation's dual circulation strategy, the Belt and Road Initiative and the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

"Dr Lam has also led the HKTDC in stepping up the support for small and medium-sized enterprises to tap the domestic sales market in the Mainland, providing the much needed impetus for reviving our economy. The re-appointment of Dr Lam as Chairman of the HKTDC will help ensure the necessary continuity and smooth implementation of the various initiatives in the coming two years."

Dr Lam is the Chairman of Lai Sun Group and a member of the Trade and Industry Advisory Board. He has a distinguished track record in public service.

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## **Commencement notice for Air Pollution Control (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 gazetted**

The Government published in the Gazette today (May 14) the Air Pollution Control (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 (Commencement) Notice (the Commencement Notice).

The Legislative Council passed the Air Pollution Control (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 (the Amendment Ordinance) on April 28 to tighten three air quality objectives (AQOs), namely the 24-hour AQO for sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and the annual and 24-hour AQOs of fine suspended particulates (FSP/PM<sub>2.5</sub>) stipulated in Schedule 5 to the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (APCO) (Cap. 311) (see Annex) and to provide a transitional arrangement for designated projects with Environmental Permits (EPs) granted under the Environmental

Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) (Cap. 499) before the commencement of the new AQOs.

The Commencement Notice seeks to appoint January 1, 2022, as the day on which the Amendment Ordinance comes into operation.

A spokesman for the Environment Bureau said, "If the Legislative Council passes the Commencement Notice, the new AQOs will take effect on January 1, 2022. To preserve the integrity of the environmental impact assessment system and follow the past arrangement when updating the AQOs, for designated projects with EPs granted under the EIAO before the commencement of the new AQOs, the AQOs which took effect on January 1, 2014, will be applicable to an application for a variation of the EPs lodged within 36 months of the commencement of the new AQOs."

The Commencement Notice will be tabled at the Legislative Council for negative vetting on May 26.

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## **Special sale arrangements for monthly parking tickets of seven government car parks managed by TD for June**

The Transport Department (TD) said today (May 14) that in view of the latest situation of COVID-19, special arrangements will continue to be implemented at the seven government car parks under the management of the TD for the sale of monthly tickets for June to reduce the risk of virus spread in the community.

The existing holders of a monthly ticket for private car/van, motorcycle or taxi for May can purchase a monthly ticket for the same vehicle type for June with priority. These eligible monthly ticket holders have to complete the procedures for purchasing the monthly ticket for June by 9pm on May 22 at the shroff offices of the car parks concerned. Any such person who fails to purchase the monthly ticket before the above deadline will be regarded as having given up his or her right to purchase the monthly ticket for June. The unsold monthly tickets for private car/van for June will be sold at the shroff offices of the car parks concerned on a first-come, first-served basis from 7.30am on May 23, while the unsold monthly tickets for motorcycle and taxi for June will be sold at the shroff offices from 7.30am on May 24.

The seven government car parks are Star Ferry Car Park, City Hall Car Park, Tin Hau Car Park, Shau Kei Wan Car Park, Aberdeen Car Park, Kwai Fong Car Park and Tsuen Wan Car Park.

The car park operators will put up notices in the car parks in advance to inform motorists of the above special arrangements.

Meanwhile, the TD is going to sell the monthly parking tickets on a first-come, first-served basis or through balloting upon the relaxation of the epidemic. In this connection, car park users are advised to pay attention to the announcements of the TD and the updated notices put up by the car park operators in the car parks.

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## **Flag-raising ceremony cancelled**

Owing to the thunderstorm warning, the flag-raising ceremony to be conducted at Golden Bauhinia Square, Wan Chai at 8am today (May 14) will be cancelled.

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## **Government announces enhanced anti-epidemic measures for designated quarantine hotels**

The Government announced today (May 13) that a number of enhancement measures are being put in place to further strengthen the infection control at designated quarantine hotels.

To guard against the importation of COVID-19 cases into Hong Kong, persons arriving at Hong Kong from overseas are subject to testing and compulsory quarantine requirements under a set of stringent inbound prevention and control measures. For persons arriving at Hong Kong, apart from undergoing the "test-and-hold" arrangement at the airport, they will also be subject to further tests while undergoing compulsory quarantine at designated quarantine hotels. The Government has earlier announced that while adjusting the compulsory quarantine periods for fully vaccinated arrivals, the corresponding testing arrangements will also be enhanced at the same time to ensure that even with the shortened compulsory quarantine periods, no case would slip through the net by testing as far as possible.

Apart from the existing pre-departure and/or post-arrival tests, the Government will introduce an additional test on the third day of arrival. Depending on the risk levels of places where the persons arriving at Hong Kong depart from and the applicable compulsory quarantine periods, the number

of tests these persons subject to during compulsory quarantine will also be increased to two (for 7-day compulsory quarantine period) to four times (for 21-day compulsory quarantine period). Furthermore, persons arriving at Hong Kong from extremely high-risk or very high-risk specified places, or fully vaccinated persons with shortened quarantine periods, will also be required to undergo additional compulsory tests upon the completion of compulsory quarantine (details at Annex).

To strengthen quality assurance of testing, the Government has introduced new contract terms for the contractors providing testing services at designated quarantine hotels. Currently, the role of swab takers are in general taken up by registered nurses or enrolled nurses. The new contract terms specify that all swab takers shall either be a registered nurse or an enrolled nurse, with experience in infection control and specimen collection by swabbing. The contractors shall also provide at least one officer-in-charge of specimen collection bearing the qualification of registered medical practitioner, registered nurse or other healthcare professionals with at least three years' experience in management and supervision; knowledge and experience in infection control; as well as experience in specimen collection by swabbing. The officer-in-charge shall supervise and ensure that the specimen collection process conducted under the contracts meets the standard of the Department of Health.

Regarding the combined nasal and throat swab, the Government held a demonstration of training session on May 4 for representatives of the two existing contractors. Attendees were briefed in details the infection control procedures, swabbing technique in performing combined nasal and throat swab sample collection and other precautionary measures to be taken when conducting the tests in designated quarantine hotel settings. According to the contract terms, contractors shall be responsible for conducting regular training for their staff and keep proper record of the relevant training for inspection by the Government. The relevant training demonstration can help the contractors conduct training for their staff with a view to ensuring both the quality of swabbing and procedure of infection control that meet the stringent requirement.

Under the new contract terms, contractors shall establish a self-auditing team to monitor the performance and proper compliance of their teams, including periodical assessment of the skills and knowledge of all frontline staff as well as regular refresher courses on a bi-weekly basis. Contractors shall also prepare detailed reports on staff qualification, training records, service log and self-auditing results. The Government shall evaluate the reports and follow up where necessary. If the contractor fails to meet all of the aforementioned requirements, the Government may terminate the contract at any time and debar the contractor from bidding for contracts in similar nature in future.

In view of the large number of returnees from high-risk areas staying at some designated quarantine hotels, the Government has advised the hotels to lower their occupancy rate to 80 per cent or below. In addition, air purifiers are being installed by all designated hotels on each floor where most of them have already completed doing so. The Government has advised

hotels to segregate guests returning from high-risk areas and other areas in different zones (e.g. on different floors) as far as practicable. Hotels shall remind guests that all windows should be closed before opening their door or conducting combined nasal and throat swab sampling. Hotel staff shall be tested every seven days, instead of every 14 days.