

LCQ4: Development of lands surrounding various boundary crossings

Following is a question by the Hon Lau Kwok-fan and a reply by the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, in the Legislative Council today (March 17):

Question:

There are views that the Government should optimise the use of the lands surrounding various boundary crossings in the New Territories in order to develop port economy and increase housing supply. However, the Government has not made holistic considerations in respect of the development of such lands, resulting in large tracts of agricultural land and fish ponds having been left deserted for a long time. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it has compiled statistics on the current total area of the deserted agricultural lands and fish ponds surrounding various boundary crossings in the New Territories; of the plans in place to unleash their development potential; whether it will conduct an overall planning for the deserted lands, including rezoning such lands for the development of new development areas or new towns, thereby increasing housing supply;

(2) of its new thinking on putting the lands surrounding various boundary crossings in the New Territories to optimal use, e.g. whether it will construct office buildings for relevant government departments and develop a centre for innovative industries on such lands so as to develop a port economic zone, thereby better seizing the opportunities brought by the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether it will consider setting up an ad hoc committee to study the implementation of, and conduct holistic planning for, the development projects on the lands surrounding various boundary crossings in the New Territories, as well as co-ordinate the implementation of the relevant projects; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

At present, apart from Shenzhen Bay Port, there are six land boundary control points at Hong Kong and Shenzhen boundary, including Lok Ma Chau, Lok Ma Chau Spur Line, Lo Wu, Man Kam To, Heung Yuen Wai and Sha Tau Kok. In planning the spatial layout of Hong Kong, consideration has been given to how to leverage the geographical advantages of the land near the boundary crossings with a view to meeting the demand for land in Hong Kong and

facilitating economic developments. The "Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030" study has recommended to develop a Northern Economic Belt in the northern part of New Territories. The economic belt, extending from Lok Ma Chau in the west to Heung Yuen Wai, is not only for increasing housing land but also for research and development, modern logistics, warehousing and other emerging industries. The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Lok Ma Chau Loop and the New Development Area (NDA) in the New Territories North (NTN) fall on this development axis. These developments can fully leverage the geographical advantages and development potential of the area.

Regarding the various parts of the question, after consulting the relevant policy bureaux and departments, I reply as follows:

(1) According to the information of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, currently the total area of agricultural land in Hong Kong is about 4 200 hectares, of which about 20 per cent is under active farming; and the total area of fish ponds is about 1 100 hectares, of which about 70 per cent is used for fish culture. These agricultural land and fish ponds are mainly located in the Northwest New Territories, with some near boundary control points. In the course of land use planning for the areas concerned, including planning for NDAs, full consideration is given to how the geographical advantages of the area can be leveraged. However, when considering the suitability of the land for development, whether the land is currently derelict is not of main consideration. Instead, the area, shape and topography of land, surrounding developments, any constraints on ecology and environment, and provision of infrastructure are more important.

(2) At present, we have included the areas in the vicinity of Lok Ma Chau, Lok Ma Chau Spur Line, Man Kam To, Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Points into the NTN NDA under planning.

The NTN NDA covers over 1 400 hectares of land, comprising of three Potential Development Areas (PDAs), i.e. San Tin/Lok Ma Chau Development Node, the NTN New Town (covering Heung Yuen Wai, Ping Che, Ta Kwu Ling, Hung Lung Hang and Queen's Hill) and Man Kam To Logistics Corridor. Our main planning concept is to build the new towns, the infrastructures and ancillary facilities through comprehensive planning and making optimal use of land including brownfield sites and agricultural land to meet the long-term social and economic developments of Hong Kong. The NTN NDA has easy access to and from Shenzhen and Eastern Guangdong, and possesses the geographical advantages for research and development, modern logistics, warehousing as well as emerging industries. Synergy can therefore be achieved with the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Lok Ma Chau Loop and the scientific research and technology developments in the adjacent Shenzhen, thus capitalising the development opportunities in the Mainland. This is in line with the development strategy of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, under which the Central Government strongly supports the cooperation between Hong Kong and Shenzhen in developing an international innovation and technology hub.

Concerning the San Tin/Lok Ma Chau Development Node, a study has been commenced in September 2019. According to preliminary assessment, the Development Node covers about 320 hectares of land. In conjunction with the Northern Link under planning, it will have the potential for medium-to high-density developments with a capacity of producing about 31 000 residential flats, among which about 70 per cent will be for public housing, that can accommodate around 84 000 residents and generate around 64 000 job opportunities. Of the said area of land, about 50 hectares, i.e. about 18 per cent, will be designated for "Enterprise and Technology Park" for corporate offices and information and technology uses. This will tie in with the adjoining development of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Lok Ma Chau Loop and achieve synergy. In view that the Hong Kong and Shenzhen Governments have agreed on and obtained the Central Government's support for the implementation of the co-location arrangement at the redeveloped Huanggang Port, and thereby releasing over 20 hectares of land at the existing Lok Ma Chau Boundary Control Point for other uses, we will consider from a holistic point of view how to utilise such released land when planning for the Development Node.

The Man Kam To Logistics Corridor and NTN New Town, respectively in proximity of the Man Kam To Boundary Control Point and Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point, cover an even larger area totalling about 1 140 hectares and are expected to accommodate not less than 200 000 residents and provide about 134 000 job opportunities in preliminary. We will explore how these areas can tie in with the development trend of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and formulate plans for new industries and new job opportunities in the area with a view to boosting Hong Kong's economic vibrancy, creating job opportunities in these areas, and thereby easing the problem of over-concentration of jobs in the urban areas. For example, we reserved 56 hectares of land in the proximity of Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point for development of science park/industrial estate. The Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation has completed a visionary study for developing the land as a new industrial estate, and set out the mode and direction of development, and would commence the engineering and technical feasibility study in the second quarter in 2021.

In the course of planning NTN NDA, we will reserve land for government, institution and community facilities, including government offices, as appropriate. In fact, there are plans to orderly move out large government offices from core business areas to various locations for more effective use of land. In other NDAs, such as Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen NDA, land is also reserved for large-scale government complex facilities to serve the local community.

To take forward the three projects of NTN NDA, the Government intends to submit funding application to the Legislative Council in the first half of this year. The funding will cover the investigation and detailed design for San Tin/Lok Ma Chau Development Node, as well as the planning and engineering study for NTN New Town and Man Kam To Logistics Corridor in advance.

(3) The Government has set up appropriate steering and co-ordinating

mechanism at different levels to take forward land development. Under the Development Bureau, there is a team led by a directorate officer responsible for co-ordinating with relevant departments to offer holistic and comprehensive considerations at the land and project planning stage for the various NDAs in the New Territories and developments in the vicinity of the boundary crossings. There are also teams led by directorate officers under the Civil Engineering and Development Department to liaise closely with the relevant departments during the process of implementing the projects, so that the works of site formation, infrastructures and various public facilities are carried out in a timely and orderly manner. Currently, we do not have any plan to set up ad hoc committee specifically for developments in proximity to boundary crossing points.

Thank you, President.

LCQ11: Search and rescue and patrol work in the countryside

Following is a question by the Hon Jeffrey Lam and a written reply by the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, in the Legislative Council today (March 17):

Question:

It has been reported that since the number of people visiting the countryside for recreation and amenity (hikers) increased sharply last year as compared with those of the previous years, the number of mountain search and rescue (S&R) calls received by the relevant government departments in the same period rose correspondingly. In addition, quite a number of hikers committed unlawful acts during their visits to the countryside, such as littering and improper disposal of cigarette butts, causing damage to trees and recreational facilities, as well as barbequing or cooking outside designated places. Regarding S&R and patrol work in the countryside, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of mountain S&R operations in which the Government Flying Service (GFS) participated, and the average number of officers, fuel cost and total expenditure involved in each of such operations, in each of the past three years;

(2) of the number of mountain S&R calls received by the Fire Services Department (FSD), and the casualties of the relevant incidents, in each of the past three years; whether the Government will consider making public the relevant figures and details on a monthly basis so as to remind hikers to pay attention to safety;

(3) whether it has assessed, among the cases of the calls mentioned in (2), the respective numbers of those belonging to (i) misuse of the service and (ii) incidents arising from the reckless acts of the persons seeking assistance (e.g. taking photographs at spots located at precipitous terrains or hiking under inclement weather), as well as the impacts of these two types of cases on other emergency rescue services; whether the Government will step up publicity efforts to remind hikers to pay more attention to safety and make reasonable use of emergency call services;

(4) of the number of occasions on which hikers activated the GPS Hiker Tracking Service on the Government's mobile applications, and the number of S&R operations in which the location of the persons seeking assistance was ascertained through such service, in each of the past three years;

(5) given that the number of mountain S&R calls increased in recent years, whether the Government has allocated additional resources to the relevant government departments (i.e. the FSD, GFS and Civil Aid Service) so as to enhance their equipment, manpower and training in respect of S&R;

(6) whether it will make good use of technologies to carry out mountain S&R operations, e.g. using unmanned aircraft systems to search for persons seeking assistance as well as deliver relief materials to them, providing QR codes on the distance posts along hiking trails to facilitate persons seeking assistance to provide their accurate locations, and erecting luminous warning signs powered by solar photovoltaic or wind power generation systems; and

(7) of the approaches currently adopted by the relevant government departments for patrolling hiking trails to combat hikers' unlawful acts and how much manpower is involved in such work, as well as how such departments get to know that there are damaged trails or recreational facilities; the time normally taken to complete the restoration of damaged trails and recreational facilities?

Reply:

President,

Different government departments have been striving to publicise and promote the importance of mountaineering safety among the public through various channels to prevent danger. The departments concerned are also constantly reviewing their capabilities for conducting emergency rescue operations in mountaineering accidents. If necessary, the Government will allocate additional resources to maintain the quality and efficiency of related emergency services and rescue operations.

Having consulted the relevant bureau and departments, our consolidated reply to the Hon Jeffrey Lam's question is as follows:

(1) Every Government Flying Service (GFS) helicopter on a call-out is

normally manned by two pilots and at least two air crewman officers. Depending on operational needs and the condition of the injured in each mountain search and rescue operation, the GFS may also arrange their Air Medical Officer and Air Medical Nursing Officers, officers of the Fire Services Department (FSD) and the Civil Aid Service (CAS), etc. to join the call-outs to provide support.

The numbers of helicopter flights conducted by the GFS in mountain search and rescue operations in the past three years are tabulated below:

	2018	2019	2020
Number of flights	435	421	885

In the past three years, on average, each mountain search and rescue operation takes about one hour. The average direct operating costs of helicopter call-outs (i.e. maintenance cost and fuel cost) are tabulated below:

	2018	2019	2020
AS-322 L2 Super Puma	\$28,950 (\$3,883)	\$25,830 (\$3,672)	\$21,470 (\$3,532)
EC 155B1	\$21,960 (\$3,164)	\$22,610 (\$2,992)	\$22,300 (\$2,878)
H 175	\$26,310 (\$3,595)	\$22,290 (\$3,400)	\$20,590 (\$3,270)

Note: The figures in brackets represent the fuel cost.

(2) According to the FSD's record, the statistics on mountain rescue incidents handled by the Department in the past three years are tabulated below:

	2018	2019	2020
Number of mountain rescue call-outs	242	215	602
Number of casualties in the incidents	129 (9)	121 (13)	323 (11)

Note: The figures in brackets represent the number of deaths.

Currently, the FSD has no plans to publish the relevant figures and details on a regular basis. However, it has uploaded information on mountaineering safety to its website and official Facebook page to remind hikers to stay safe.

(3) The FSD does not maintain relevant statistics on the abuse of emergency services and accidents due to recklessness of hikers among the emergency call cases as mentioned in part (2).

Various government departments have been publicising and promoting mountaineering safety through different means, including the following:

(i) The FSD's website and official Facebook page provide information on mountaineering safety for public access, including tips on pre-trip preparation, points to note on safety during hiking, as well as ways to seek help and self-rescue in case of danger.

(ii) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has all along been encouraging hikers to use the hiking trails maintained by the department to avoid accidents. To assist hikers to plan suitable routes, the AFCD promotes and provides integrated information on hiking trails including Long Distance Trails, Country Trails, Family Walks and Nature Trails through the "Enjoy Hiking" website. Moreover, the AFCD has set up information boards and directory signs at suitable locations in country parks to provide trail information and remind hikers about safety. The AFCD has also erected warning signs at locations with higher risks within country parks to alert hikers to avoid these sites.

(iii) The CAS regularly organises the Mountaineering Safety Promotion Day as well as mountaineering safety talks for secondary school students to enhance the public's mountaineering knowledge and safety awareness.

(4) The Security Bureau's "Safeguard HK" mobile application and the AFCD's "Enjoy Hiking" mobile application both provide "Hiker Tracking Service", through which hikers could store their location records at the service centre of the Communications Association of Hong Kong. In case of accidents, the rescue team could trace the location of the missing persons with their mobile numbers, thereby enhancing the efficiency of mountain rescue operations. In the past three years, there were nine search and rescue cases in which the location of the missing hikers was tracked through this service.

(5) The Government has been allocating additional resources to the departments concerned as necessary to enhance their emergency rescue capabilities in mountaineering accidents, including the following:

(i) The FSD set up a Mountain Search and Rescue Team (MSRT) in October 2016, currently with 200 members deployed to fire stations near popular mountain activity spots. All MSRT members have to receive specialised training on advanced mountain search and rescue techniques, which include orienteering, rope rescue, large-area mountain search and rescue strategies, as well as performing rescue missions under extreme weather, etc.

MSRT members are all equipped with personal protective equipment, and each mountain search and rescue unit is equipped with professional rescue tools and emergency survival equipment to assist members in performing mountain rescue work. Besides, a Mountain Search and Rescue Support Team (MSRST), comprising instructors from the Fire and Ambulance Services Academy with rich experience in mountain search and rescue, was also established to provide incident commanders in mountain rescue incident with technical and strategic support by, for example, analysing information and clues about

missing persons, assisting in formulating search and rescue strategy, and liaising with relevant government departments, etc.

The FSD also analyses trends of mountain accidents and reviews the search and rescue strategy from time to time with a view to strengthening the capability of handling incidents. For example, the number of mountain accidents in Lantau Island area has been increasing in recent years. To better cope with the mountain accidents in Lantau Island, the seventh MSRT was established in Tai O Fire Station in February 2021.

(ii) The GFS's seven new H175 helicopters have been fully operational since Q3 2019. In addition to improving flight safety, they have also enhanced the search and rescue capability, endurance and the loading capacity of the helicopter fleet.

Furthermore, the GFS is preparing for the establishment of a Flight Simulator Training Centre (FSTC) at the GFS Headquarters, which is expected to come into operation in Q4 2022. FSTC will provide the GFS pilots with the necessary flight simulation training, which will be conducive to enhancing their training efficiency and technical competency, increasing the pilots' availability for deployment in conducting emergency flying missions, thereby enabling the GFS to meet service needs more effectively. In addition, the GFS Kai Tak Division is expected to be in full operation in Q3 this year, enabling the GFS to maintain effective and efficient emergency services round the clock.

(iii) The CAS is upgrading the training facilities at Yuen Tun Camp and enhancing the related training to strengthen the rescue capabilities of its members in response to mountaineering accidents. With respect to equipment, the CAS plans to procure a brand new digital radio communications system to replace the existing system, thereby further promoting its operational efficiency.

(6) The FSD provides MSRT with special equipment including GPS tracking device, Unmanned Aircraft Systems, Night Vision Systems, infrared telescope and communications equipment required for setting up temporary command posts in the countryside. The CAS has also procured two drones with night vision capabilities to further boost its search and rescue efficiency.

The AFCD will consider the feasibility of introducing the proposed technology according to the actual site conditions of hiking trails with a view to reducing hiking accidents and assisting relevant departments in conducting search and rescue operations.

(7) The AFCD staff conducts regular patrols in country parks and special areas to monitor the conditions of country parks and visitors' usage of relevant facilities. Appropriate enforcement action would be taken against illegal activities if detected. In view of the large number of people visiting country parks recently, the AFCD has stepped up patrol, publicity and enforcement action at popular hiking locations to raise visitors' awareness on caring for the countryside. At present, the AFCD has about 150

staff members responsible for the daily patrol and law enforcement work in country parks and special areas throughout the territory.

The repair and maintenance of hiking trails in country parks are part of the AFCD's regular management work for country parks. The department arranges staff to carry out regular inspection of the conditions of hiking trails and prioritises trail maintenance work according to the degree of wear and risk level of the hiking trails. The time required for the repair work will depend on the degree of wear and the surrounding environment of the trails and visitor facilities.

LCQ2: Promoting a post-epidemic green recovery of the economy

Following is a question by the Hon Martin Liao and a reply by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, in the Legislative Council today (March 17):

Question:

Since last year, a number of international organisations such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have, one after another and on a number of occasions, called on the governments of various countries to promote a post-epidemic "green recovery" of their economies, and to steer their economic revitalisation measures along the direction of green and low-carbon transformation and sustainable development. China has also called on various countries to seize the historic opportunities presented by the new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation, and promote a post-epidemic green recovery of the world economy. The Hong Kong SAR Government has also stated that it will support a green recovery of the economy. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the plans and measures to promote a post-epidemic green recovery of Hong Kong's economy; in respect of each measure, the anticipated manpower and expenditure involved, economic benefits to be generated and implementation timetable, and how the measures will help Hong Kong reach its latest target of achieving carbon neutrality before 2050;

(2) of the plans and measures to support Hong Kong's various sectors in seizing the green economic opportunities in the short, medium and long terms in areas such as green finance, green innovation and technology, as well as green industries; and

(3) whether it has assessed the respective green employment opportunities to

be brought by the aforesaid measures for Hong Kong; whether it has set new targets (including those relating to economic benefits and employment opportunities) for the future development of Hong Kong's environmental industry; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

As the pandemic has dealt a blow to our economy, all departments of the Hong Kong SAR Government are committed to boosting the economy and creating job opportunities. In terms of environmental protection, the Environment Bureau has adopted a number of new measures on the promotion of cleaner energy and renewable energy, energy efficiency and green building, green transportation, waste reduction and recycling, green infrastructure, and green innovative technologies. These measures will not only create green economic and employment opportunities and promote a green recovery, but will also continuously improve the environment and help Hong Kong move towards the goal of achieving carbon neutrality before 2050.

To promote cleaner energy, the two power companies will continue to renew their gas-fired generating units to replace the coal-fired ones and develop an offshore liquefied natural gas terminal. On renewable energy, the government launched the Feed-in Tariff in 2018 and "Solar Harvest" to install solar energy generation systems for schools and welfare organisations. Together with other facilitation measures, more than 180 million kWh of renewable energy can be produced. It is expected that the above-mentioned measures will create more than 5 000 jobs in relevant industries.

The Government also set aside a total of \$3 billion to install small-scale renewable energy systems on government premises. It is expected that about 27 million kWh of electricity will be generated per annum. To help various sectors save energy and reduce carbon emissions, the Government introduced the \$600 million "Green Schools 2.0 – Energy Smart" programme and the \$150 million "Green Welfare NGOs" programme to conduct energy audits and install energy-saving devices for primary and secondary schools and social welfare organisations. It is estimated that the programme will achieve an electricity saving of 45 million kWh per annum. The Government will also construct an additional district cooling system in the Kai Tak Development Area, and new district cooling systems in Tung Chung New Town Extension (East) and Kwu Tung North New Development Area respectively. The three projects with a total construction cost of about \$14 billion can save about 130 million kWh of electricity per annum. The above-mentioned Government allocations and projects can create more than 1 600 job opportunities.

In order to promote green transportation, the Government set aside more than \$10 billion last year to launch a series of measures, including the \$2 billion EV-charging at Home Subsidy Scheme and the \$7.1 billion ex-gratia payment scheme to phase out about 40 000 Euro IV diesel commercial vehicles. These measures can provide more than 700 employment opportunities.

On waste management, more than 700 job opportunities will be created by

various measures on waste reduction and recycling, including collection and recycling services for waste paper, food waste and waste plastic, GREEN@COMMUNITY's recycling network including Recycling Stations, Recycling Stores and Recycling Spots, and the reverse vending machine pilot scheme for plastic beverage containers.

The Government will commence a number of green infrastructure projects in the coming three years, including construction and upgrading of sewerage treatment works, improvement and expansion of sewerage systems, rehabilitation of ageing sewers, installation of dry weather flow interceptors and retrofitting of noise barriers or enclosures at suitable existing road sections. The above green infrastructure projects are estimated to involve a total expenditure of about \$14 billion and create about 1 700 employment opportunities.

To capitalise on the enormous green finance opportunities, the Government plans to expand the scale of the Government Green Bond Programme and arrange for the regular issuance of green bonds totalling \$175.5 billion within the next five years, having regard to the market situation. We will also launch the Green and Sustainable Finance Grant Scheme to provide subsidy for eligible entities to cover their expenses on bond issuance and external review services, which will enhance Hong Kong's position as a green finance hub in the region.

In addition, the Government has set up a \$200 million Green Tech Fund to provide better and more focused funding support to research and development projects which can help Hong Kong decarbonise and enhance environmental protection. It will promote the application of innovative technologies and create hundreds of job opportunities.

As a whole, the above-mentioned resources devoted by the Government can create more than 5 000 employment opportunities in the coming few years. The Government's policy on carbon reduction in electricity generation will also drive investment in the private sector, creating another 5 000 employment opportunities. In total, more than 10 000 job opportunities will be created to support a green recovery.

Looking to the medium and long terms, Hong Kong will continue to promote green economic opportunities in various aspects in the course of striving towards carbon neutrality. For examples, the Government announced the "Waste Blueprint for Hong Kong 2035" in February this year, setting out the vision of "Waste Reduction–Resources Circulation–Zero Landfill", and outlining the strategies, goals and measures to meet the challenges of waste management up to 2035. Besides, we will allocate another \$1 billion to the Recycling Fund to further support the upgrading and transformation of the recycling trade. This will benefit more than 1 000 recycling enterprises, provide thousands of employment opportunities, and help develop a circular economy.

Hong Kong's first Roadmap on the Popularisation of Electric Vehicles to be announced today will set out target and related measures to cease the new registration of fuel-propelled private cars in or before 2035, and provide

new development opportunities for electric vehicles and the relevant trades in the medium and long terms. Later this year, we will update "A Clean Air Plan for Hong Kong 2035" to formulate new targets and measures to further improve air quality. We will also update the "Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan" to set out long-term strategies for achieving carbon neutrality. These policy blueprints will establish new targets which are closely related to green finance, green innovative technology and green industry, and will continuously promote the development of green economy in Hong Kong in the medium and long terms and create more green employment opportunities in the future.

Thank you, President.

Granting of banking licence to Bank of Dongguan Co., Ltd.

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority announced today (March 17) that the Monetary Authority has granted a banking licence to Bank of Dongguan Co., Ltd. (BOD) under the Banking Ordinance. BOD is incorporated in the People's Republic of China. The granting of this banking licence takes effect today.

After the granting of a banking licence to BOD, the number of licensed banks in Hong Kong is 162.

Public urged not to buy or consume slimming product with undeclared Western drug ingredient (with photo)

The Department of Health (DH) today (March 17) appealed to the public not to buy or consume a slimming product named LKS Coffee as it was found to contain an undeclared and banned drug ingredient that might be dangerous to health.

Acting upon intelligence, a sample of the above product was purchased via a social media network platform for analysis. The test result from the Government Laboratory revealed that the sample contained a banned drug

ingredient, sibutramine. The DH's investigation is continuing.

Sibutramine is a Part 1 poison under the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap. 138). It was once used as an appetite suppressant. Since November 2010, pharmaceutical products containing sibutramine have been banned in Hong Kong because of increased cardiovascular risk.

According to the Ordinance, all pharmaceutical products must be registered with the Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong before they can be legally sold in the market. Illegal sale or possession of unregistered pharmaceutical products or Part 1 poisons are criminal offences. The maximum penalty for each offence is a fine of \$100,000 and two years' imprisonment.

The DH spokesman strongly urged members of the public not to buy products of unknown or doubtful composition, or to consume products from unknown sources. Members of the public who have purchased the above product should stop consuming it immediately. They should consult healthcare professionals for advice if feeling unwell after consumption.

The spokesman added that weight control should be achieved through a balanced diet and appropriate exercise. The public should consult healthcare professionals before using any medication for weight control. They may visit the website of the Drug Office of the DH for "[Health message on overweight problem and slimming products](#)" and "[Information on slimming products with undeclared Western drug ingredients](#)" for more information.

The public may submit the above product to the Drug Office of the DH at Room 1801, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, during office hours for disposal.

