

HKSAR Government's Green Bonds Offering

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

“The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China (the HKSAR Government) today announced the successful offering of US\$2.5 billion of green bonds (the Green Bonds) under the Government Green Bond Programme.

The offering comprises three tranches of US\$1 billion 5-year, US\$1 billion 10-year and US\$500 million 30-year green bonds, which will build a comprehensive benchmark curve for potential issuers in Hong Kong and the region. The 30-year tranche is also the first 30-year green bond to be issued by an Asian government, and the longest tenor to be issued by the HKSAR Government.

Following a virtual roadshow on January 25, 2021, the Rule 144A/Reg S USD Green Bonds were priced on January 26, 2021 at 0.635 per cent (22.5 basis points over 5-year US Treasuries) for the 5-year tranche; 1.414 per cent (37.5 basis points over 10-year US Treasuries) for the 10-year tranche; and 2.431 per cent (62.5 basis points over 30-year US Treasuries) for the 30-year tranche. The Green Bonds saw strong demand from global investors, with the 5-year and the 10-year tranche each attracting orders more than five times their respective issuance sizes, and the 30-year tranche attracting orders more than seven times its issuance size.

The deal attracted strong interest from a diverse group of conventional and green investors. There was overwhelming demand from Asian institutional investors, resulting in the overall allocation of 65 per cent of the total issuance size to this group. This reflects the strong pick-up in Asian investors' appetite for green financial products and demonstrates Hong Kong's leading role in championing green finance in the region. European and US investors received an allocation respectively, of 20 per cent and 15 per cent of the total issuance. Worth noting is the strong preference of European and US investors for longer-tenor green bonds, with a combined allocation of half of the 30-year tranche. By investor type, 34 per cent of the Green Bonds were distributed to banks, 46 per cent to fund managers, private banks and insurance companies, and 20 per cent to central banks, sovereign wealth funds and supranationals.

"The success of the offering demonstrates investor confidence in Hong Kong's credit strengths and economic fundamentals in the long term. The issuance will help catalyse further growth of the green and sustainable bond market, particularly leveraging on Hong Kong's strengths as a leading green finance hub in the region," the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, said.

Mr Chan added, "Building on the momentum from the successful issuance of

the inaugural green bond in 2019, we have set up the world's first government "Global Medium Term Note Programme" dedicated to green bond issuances to demonstrate the continued commitment of Hong Kong in promoting sustainable development and facilitate the Government's regular green bond issuance activities."

The Green Bonds are being issued under a newly-established "Global Medium Term Note Programme" dedicated to green bond issuances. The Green Bonds are expected to be settled on February 2, 2021 and listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange and the London Stock Exchange. The Green Bonds have been assigned credit ratings of AA+ by S&P Global Ratings and AA- by Fitch.

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority acts as the HKSAR Government's representative in the green bond offerings under the Government Green Bond Programme. Proceeds raised under the Programme will be credited to the Capital Works Reserve Fund to finance or refinance public works projects that provide environmental benefits and support the sustainable development of Hong Kong.

The HKSAR Government published its Green Bond Framework in 2019, which sets out how green bond proceeds will be used to fund projects that will improve the environment and facilitate the transition to a low carbon economy. Vigeo Eiris has provided a Second Party Opinion for the Green Bond Framework. The Green Bonds have also received the Green Finance Certificate (Pre-issuance Stage) from the Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency.

Credit Agricole CIB and HSBC acted as Joint Global Coordinators, Joint Lead Managers, Joint Bookrunners and Joint Green Structuring Banks for the Green Bonds offering, and BNP PARIBAS, Citigroup, ICBC (Asia), J.P. Morgan and Standard Chartered Bank acted as Joint Bookrunners and Joint Lead Managers.

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APPLICABLE STATE LAWS. THERE WILL BE NO PUBLIC OFFERING OF SUCH SECURITIES IN THE UNITED STATES.

Office hours for CEDD public services to return to normal tomorrow

The Civil Engineering and Development Department announced today (January 27) that the office hours for the Civil Engineering Library, applications for dumping licences and sand removal permits, and the Permit and Licensing Office of the Mines Division will return to normal tomorrow (January 28), with details as follows:

- (1) The Civil Engineering Library will open from 9am to 12.30pm and from 2pm to 5pm, Monday to Friday;
- (2) Applications for dumping licences and sand removal permits can be made from 9am to 12.30pm and from 1.30pm to 5.15pm, Monday to Friday; and
- (3) The Permit and Licensing Office of the Mines Division will open from 9am to noon and from 2pm to 4pm, Monday to Friday, and from 9am to 11am on Saturday.

Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates in public hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rates in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.

SWD invites applications for IT schemes for persons with disabilities

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) is inviting applications from today (January 27) until February 23 from eligible individuals and organisations for grants from the IT Scheme for People with Visual Impairment (1st Round) (formerly known as the Jockey Club IT Scheme for People with Visual Impairment) and the Central Fund for Personal Computers (43rd Round).

To help people with visual impairment (PVI) to have access to information technology for social inclusion, the SWD, under the auspices of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, launched the Jockey Club IT Scheme for People with Visual Impairment in 2005. Over the years, the Jockey Club IT Scheme for People with Visual Impairment has been supporting non-governmental and non-profit-making organisations, as well as tertiary institutions providing services or schooling for PVI to acquire advanced Chinese screen readers, Braille displays and accessories to facilitate PVI's surfing on the Internet, and to subsidise individual PVI with genuine financial difficulty to purchase these devices for study or employment purposes.

The Jockey Club IT Scheme for People with Visual Impairment ended after the 30th batch of application in mid-2020. To continue its support for PVI, the SWD is now launching the IT Scheme for People with Visual Impairment, with the relevant eligibility, scope of subsidisation, level of subsidy and more remaining unchanged.

Successful organisational applicants will be supported in full for purchasing a set of high-performance Chinese screen reader (capped at \$9,800) and/or Braille displays (capped at \$36,000) and/or accessories (capped at \$66,300) on the reference list under the scheme. Successful individual applicants will be sponsored to purchase a set of high-performance Chinese screen reader with an amount not more than \$9,800 and/or accessories/portable devices not more than \$49,600 and/or Braille display not more than \$32,400 on the same reference list.

Eligible organisations may lodge their applications by completing the designated forms. For applications by individuals, nomination from subvented non-governmental rehabilitation organisations, the student affairs offices of local tertiary institutions, principals of local secondary/primary schools, or the Selective Placement Division of the Labour Department (LD) is required, and the application should be submitted through the nominating organisation in the designated form together with the quotations for the items concerned. Invitation letters have been sent to the relevant organisations to invite nominations.

As for the Central Fund for Personal Computers, the Fund aims to assist eligible persons with disabilities in acquiring the required computer

facilities for self-employment or receiving supported employment services at home with guidance and follow-up services to be provided by the referral rehabilitation organisations or the Selective Placement Division of the LD. Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- (a) be users of and nominated by rehabilitation service organisations or the Selective Placement Division of the LD;
- (b) have difficulties in engaging in open employment;
- (c) provide a viable business plan which has to use computer facilities;
- (d) have financial difficulty in acquiring the required computer facilities;
- (e) be capable of using a computer to carry out the business plan; and
- (f) have the consent of the nominating organisations or the LD to provide guidance and follow-up services after applicants' acquisition of the computer facilities.

For enquiries, please contact the Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services Branch of the SWD on 3586 3594, through email to eoimc@swd.gov.hk or by fax to 2834 7046.

Details of the above schemes are available on the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk) and CyberAble.net (www.CyberAble.net). Information notes and application forms can also be downloaded from these websites.

Government finishes exercise on “restriction-testing declaration” and compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Yau Ma Tei (with photos)

â€‹The Government on January 26 exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" (declaration) effective from 7pm, by which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Yau Ma Tei (i.e. 9-27 Pitt Street and 3 Tung On Street) are required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing in accordance with the arrangement by the Government. Persons subject to compulsory testing are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the area have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. The Government aimed at finishing this exercise at around 6am today (January 27), in order to achieve the goal of zero cases in the district with concerted efforts. The Government announces the exercise finished at around 6am today.

The Government set up eight temporary specimen collection stations in the "restricted area" on January 26 and requested persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo rapid antigen test and to collect combined nasal and throat swabs samples at the stations to undergo COVID-19 virus test before midnight yesterday. Test results of the rapid antigen test are available in around 30 minutes.

In this exercise, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) and its Office of the Licensing Authority, the Hong Kong Police Force, the Yau Tsim Mong District Office and the Sham Shui Po District Office mobilised around 380 staff to arrange implementation of the declaration and notice.

The Government provided simple food for persons subject to compulsory testing, including cup noodles, soup packs (pork or chicken), soy milk, canned pork ham and tuna fish, and bottled water, etc, so as to facilitate the dinner arrangement of some persons subject to compulsory testing. One box of masks and hand sanitizers, etc, were also provided to persons subject to compulsory testing to help them fight against the virus.

Taking into consideration that there are a number of ethnic minorities in the "restricted area", the HAD has arranged 18 working staff who can speak Nepali, Urdu or Hindi to assist ethnic minorities to undergo testing in specimen collection stations and help explain the arrangement on the "restriction-testing declaration". In order to assist ethnic minorities in understanding the content of the declaration, the HAD had also produced leaflets in three more popular ethnic minority languages (Nepali, Urdu and Hindi) for distribution to persons in the "restricted area". The HAD has also set up a dedicated hotline for ethnic minorities restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance. The other hotline set up by the HAD has handled around 26 enquiries in total on testing arrangement and testing area, etc.

The Government thanks persons subject to compulsory testing for their support and understanding. With everyone's co-operation and efforts, coupling with the tireless efforts from the testing contractors, residents have been informed about their testing results. Taking into account of the above situation, the "restriction-testing declaration" has been revoked in accordance with Cap. 599J (see attachment). The Government had also announced that the exercise was ended at around 6am today, so as to allow residents enough time to get prepared to start getting to work in the morning.

During the effective period of the declaration, about 330 persons underwent testing, one confirmed case was found. The person with confirmed case and the relevant close contact have been hospitalised and transferred to quarantine centres respectively for follow up.

Besides, the Government visited 306 households, of which around 93 of them did not answer the door. Among these households, some live in buildings in the "restricted area" which have not been evacuated. Households with confirmed cases or undergoing quarantine may also be included. Some units are possibly vacant. The Government does not have detailed information in this respect and will take measures to follow-up and trace households in the

district which have not responded.

The Government understands that residents in the district are worried and anxious because of the increase in confirmed cases in recent days. Under the epidemic, businesses in the area have been hit hard and brought to a standstill. Residents' livelihood are also affected. The Government hopes this temporary inconvenience will completely cut the local transmission chains in the district and ease residents' worries and fear, so that they will regain confidence in resuming social and business activities in the area, and return to a normal life.

The Government expresses its gratitude to the persons subject to compulsory testing again for their support and understanding, and their full co-operation during this period in undergoing testing and waiting for the result at home. The Government also thanks all the participating Government staff and the testing agencies for their hard work, enabling the smooth implementation of the declaration within 11 hours, minimising inconvenience brought to the persons subject to compulsory testing.

The Government as a whole is united in fighting against the virus despite all the difficulties by providing testing for all the residents in the district within a short period of time, in the hope of achieving zero cases in the district.

The Government will strictly follow up on enforcement implementation. The Government also reminds persons who had been present in the "restricted area" for more than two hours in the past 14 days, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, to comply with the compulsory testing notices and undergo testing at testing centres as soon as possible for the sake of themselves and that of the others. Undergoing testing is a responsible act for oneself, his/her family and the community. Any person who breaches the "restriction-testing declaration" commits an offence and may be liable to a fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months.



