

## Tender awarded for site in Fanling

The Lands Department announced today (January 13) that the tender for a site, Fanling Sheung Shui Town Lot No. 268 at the junction of On Lok Mun Street, On Chuen Street and On Kui Street, Fanling, New Territories, has been awarded to the highest tenderer, Mapletree TM (HKSAR) Limited (parent company: Mapletree Investments Pte Ltd), on a 50-year land grant at a premium of \$812,940,000.

The tenderers, other than the successful tenderer, in alphabetical order, with the name of the parent company where provided by the tenderer in brackets, were:

- (1) Crown Gain Investments Limited (CK Asset Holdings Limited);
- (2) Goldtime Development Limited (Sunevision Holdings Ltd.);
- (3) Grand Build Development Limited (Grand Ming Group Holdings Limited);
- (4) J.L. Group Company Limited (Chinney Investments, Limited);
- (5) Perfect Fame Limited (Sino Land Company Limited);
- (6) Strong Associate Limited (K. Wah Properties (Holdings) Limited); and
- (7) Wealth Fortune Enterprise Limited (Billion Real Estate Holdings Limited).

Fanling Sheung Shui Town Lot No. 268 has a site area of about 4,028 square metres and the permissible uses are industrial; godown and ancillary office; office in direct support of an industrial operation; information technology and telecommunications industries; research, design and development centre; audio-visual recording studio; media design and media production; workshop for laundering, dry cleaning, tailoring or repair of goods; art studio; vehicle repair workshop, vehicle inspection centre or vehicle testing centre; cargo handling and forwarding facilities; showroom ancillary to factory; motor vehicle showroom on the ground floor; laboratory, inspection and testing centre; recyclable collection centre; public vehicle park; and a combination of any of the permissible uses. The minimum gross floor area and the maximum gross floor area are 12,084 sq m and 20,140 sq m respectively, both excluding the gross floor area of the public vehicle park to be constructed by the purchaser under the Conditions of Sale.

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## LCQ4: Targeted anti-epidemic measures

Following is a question by the Hon Wilson Or and a reply by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, in the Legislative Council today (January 13):

Question:

During the outbreak of the third and fourth waves of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic, more confirmed cases were recorded in Kowloon East as compared with other districts. Moreover, the authorities issued last month notices requiring persons who had been present in specified buildings during the specified periods to undergo testing by a certain deadline, and around half of the 40-odd buildings involved are public housing blocks located in Kowloon East. Some members of the public consider that to be successful in fighting against the epidemic, anti-epidemic measures should be targeted, including strengthening the anti-epidemic efforts in Kowloon East where the epidemic situation is more serious. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it will make it compulsory for persons who reside or work in Kowloon East to undergo testing, with a view to identifying asymptomatic infected persons as far as possible;

(2) as an expert on epidemiology and a surveyor have pointed out that the public housing blocks in Kowloon East are relatively old and their sewers may leak due to disrepair and, as a result, once a resident has been infected, his or her faeces may cause the residents of the same block to get infected, whether the authorities will, in the short term, finish inspecting and repairing the sewerage systems of the various public housing blocks in the district; and

(3) whether it will, targeting at the inadequacies of the current anti-epidemic efforts, make improvements, including shortening the waiting time for persons who were the close contacts of persons confirmed to have contracted the disease to be transferred to the quarantine centres, and sending personnel to carry out disinfection work for all of the private premises where persons confirmed to have contracted the disease were present?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Transport and Housing Bureau, my reply to the various parts of the question raised by the Hon Wilson Or is as follows:

(1) Our virus testing strategy is to continue and expand compulsory testing on a mandatory basis, targeted testing on an obligatory basis and testing on a voluntary basis so as to achieve the objective of "early identification, early isolation and early treatment". Since the fourth wave of epidemic from mid-November 2020 to January 6, 2021, the Government has conducted more than 1.9 million tests, of which 3 477 samples tested preliminarily positive (0.18 per cent), successfully cutting silent transmission chains in the community.

Regarding compulsory testing on a mandatory basis, the Government has implemented the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) since November 15, 2020. As at January 11, the Government has required persons who had been to 121 specified premises, symptomatic persons, staff members of residential care homes for the elderly (RCHes), residential care homes for persons with disabilities

(RCHDs) and nursing homes, day service units attached to the premises of residential care homes and taxi drivers to undergo compulsory virus testing.

The Government has also actively expanded the scope of compulsory testing on a mandatory basis especially for residential buildings to achieve community clearing. With effect from December 30, 2020, if there are two or more units in a building with confirmed cases in the past 14 days and the units concerned are not epidemiologically linked to each other, the building would be included in the compulsory testing notice under Cap. 599J and persons who had been present at that building for more than two hours in the past 14 days are required to undergo compulsory testing. After the amendment of this criteria, 59 buildings had been included in compulsory testing notices by January 11. To tie in with the expansion of compulsory testing, the Government not only provides free testing services in 19 community testing centres (CTCs) but also set up around 50 mobile specimen collection stations in the vicinity of these buildings to facilitate persons subject to the compulsory testing notices to undergo testing. For the 42 premises subject to compulsory testing notices issued on December 30 and December 31, 2020, as at January 4, around 55 000 persons have received tests through mobile specimen collection stations and CTCs. The Government is also preparing to step up enforcement such as conducting blitz operations to demonstrate our determination to enforce the legal requirement of compulsory testing.

For Kowloon East, with the implementation of Cap. 599J since November 15, 2020, a total of 32 residential buildings have been included in compulsory testing notices. In addition to providing free testing service through the three CTCs located at Yau Tong Community Hall, Ngau Tau Kok Road Sports Centre and Morse Park Sports Centre in Wong Tai Sin, we had set up a total of 22 mobile specimen collection stations in Kowloon East, which as at January 9, 2021 provided free testing service for a total of close to 120 000 residents, of which 75 samples tested preliminarily positive (0.06 per cent). We are of the view that the present precision-guided anti-epidemic measures which focus primarily on compulsory testing for people of high-risk groups, complemented by broadened and more convenient voluntary testing for the public, constitute an appropriate strategy.

On voluntary testing, the Government provides convenient testing service to members of the public through various channels, including free testing for the public through 188 distribution points (those located in Kowloon East include 6 designated general outpatient clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority (HA), 15 post offices, and vending machines at Ngau Tau Kok MTR station) and 83 collection points (11 of which are located in Kowloon East). The above three channels can distribute over 40 000 specimen collection packs per day, while the 19 CTCs also have a total daily capacity of more than 20 000 tests.

(2) Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic, the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) has been paying much importance to the conditions of the environmental hygiene and drainage pipes of its public rental housing (PRH) estates. In complementing the Government's effort in fighting the epidemic, HA has strengthened the cleaning and disinfection work at common areas and

public facilities, and arranged staff to proactively inspect PRH units which share the same drainage system with units with confirmed cases. Additional resources have been dedicated for carrying out drainage inspections under the existing "Responsive In-flat Maintenance Scheme" and "Total Maintenance Scheme". Since the outbreak of the epidemic, the Housing Department (HD) has already carried out detailed inspections of drainage pipes of about 100 000 flats, most of which were found in satisfactory conditions. Repair works have been conducted for the remaining ones where necessary and appropriate. Moreover, HD is carrying out preliminary inspections of the drainage facilities of the remaining 300 PRH domestic blocks, the relevant work is expected to be completed before end-March 2021.

Meanwhile, the HA launched the "Drainage Inspection Programme" on October 28, 2020. Under the Programme, the HD prioritises the inspection of its approximately 800 000 PRH units with regard to the conditions of drainage pipes found from the preliminary inspections, maintenance records, percentages of elderly households and the age of housing estates or buildings, etc. Priority is also given to common drain pipes in public housing estates with confirmed cases. Where necessary, the HD will undertake repair works during inspection. The programme is expected to be completed within 18 months.

For the PRH estates in Kowloon East, the HA had preliminarily inspected drainage pipes through the various programmes mentioned above. Most of the drainage pipes were found to be in satisfactory condition. Where necessary, the HA has also undertaken the required repair works.

(3) From the start of epidemic, the Government has monitored the effectiveness of the policies on fighting the virus and reviewed the preventive control measures. After consolidating our experience, we have strengthened effective measures having regard to the changing epidemic situation and also made necessary improvements to enhance areas which fall short. The government has also continuously strengthened its response to prevention and control of COVID-19. For instance, as the quarantine arrangement for close contacts is an indispensable measure in our fight against the epidemic, the Department of Health (DH) has deployed additional manpower during the fourth wave of the epidemic, such that the number of confinees conveyed to the quarantine centers increased to about 300 daily, and over 400 daily on some days. Currently, the number of staff members for the arrangement of transferring close contacts to quarantine centres increased from 31 to 54, and will be further increased to almost 70 in the future, with a view to getting in touch with the close contacts concerned within 24 hours after a quarantine order is issued and arranging for designated vehicles to transfer them to quarantine centres for quarantine. With the enhanced manpower, the DH succeeded in contacting the relevant confinees in 24 hours. For close contacts who cannot be contacted after 2 calls within 24 hours, the DH has referred them to Police for immediate follow-up action. The DH has coordinated with the Police and the Police will fully support the DH.

Thank you, President.

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## LCQ14: Telephone deception cases

Following is a question by the Hon Vincent Cheng and a written reply by the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, in the Legislative Council today (January 13):

Question:

It has been reported that the Police recorded 895 telephone deception cases in the first three quarters of last year, representing a 1.3-fold increase when compared with the number of cases in the same period of the preceding year, with the amount of money involved increasing nearly fourfold to \$402 million. Quite a number of the fraudulent calls came from outside Hong Kong, and the fraudsters mostly impersonated government officials, bank staff and staff of financial intermediaries or courier companies. My office has also received recently a number of requests for assistance involving telephone deception. In one of the cases, a fraudster called the victim impersonating bank staff and obtained by deception the victim's personal information, with which the fraudster then applied for a loan of \$100,000 from a bank. The fraudster afterwards withdrew the money. It was only when the bank demanded repayment of the loan that the victim realised that this had been a scam. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of telephone deception cases recorded by the Police last year, with a breakdown by (i) the District Council (DC) district in which the victims resided, (ii) whether the victims suffered a pecuniary loss, and (iii) the identity impersonated by the fraudsters; among such cases, of the number of those in which the telephone calls concerned came from outside Hong Kong;

(2) of the respective numbers of persons arrested and convicted last year for being involved in telephone deception-related offences; the penalties imposed on the convicted persons; the number of cases in which the Police successfully intercepted the lost money and the amount involved;

(3) whether the Police have recently found fraudsters using new tactics to deceive others; if so, of the details; and

(4) given that the Police established the Anti-Deception Coordination Centre in July 2017 to improve intelligence gathering, enhance efforts in publicity and education, as well as strengthen cross-boundary collaboration, whether it has assessed the effectiveness of the work of the Centre; if so, of the assessment outcome, and the results achieved by the Centre in detecting and investigating fraudulent calls coming from outside Hong Kong?

Reply:

President,

Deception is a serious offence. Any person who commits the offence of fraud under section 16A of the Theft Ordinance (Cap. 210) is liable to imprisonment for up to 14 years, while any person charged with obtaining property by deception under section 17 of the same Ordinance is liable to imprisonment for up to 10 years. In addition, any person charged with dealing with property known or believed to represent proceeds of indictable offences under section 25 of the Organized and Serious Crimes Ordinance (Cap. 455) for proceeds of deception is liable to imprisonment for up to 14 years.

Combating "quick-cash" crimes is on the list of the Commissioner's Operational Priorities 2020. In particular, "targeting criminal groups involved in deception through joint efforts with stakeholders under the support of the Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC)", and "promoting public awareness and securing community support to prevent 'quick-cash' crimes, particularly telephone, Internet and social media deception", are key operational areas of the Hong Kong Police Force (the Police).

(1) and (2) During January to November 2020, the Police recorded a total of 1 108 telephone deception cases, around double of the 533 cases in the same period of 2019. Of these, 1 072 cases involved monetary losses totalling \$563 million, which was approximately four times higher than the \$112 million in the same period of 2019. Most cases recorded involved calls from outside Hong Kong. There were also cases involving local prepaid SIM cards. During the said period, the Police arrested 55 persons in total for telephone deception. The losses in the cases involving the arrested persons amounted to nearly \$160 million.

The Police currently maintains figures of telephone deception by Police Regions. Breakdown by Police Regions and modus operandi are at Annexes I and II respectively. The Government does not maintain statistics on the penalties for persons convicted of telephone deception.

(3) In recent years, the prevalent modi operandi of telephone deception are "Guess Who" and "Pretend Officials". In "Guess Who" cases, the fraudster making the call will ask the victim to guess his or her identity. Once the victim responds, the fraudster will impersonate the victim's relative or friend to swindle. As for "Pretend Officials" cases, the fraudster will often play a recording, posing as a staff member of the Government, a logistics company, or a public or private organisation, and falsely allege that the victim is involved in a criminal case in the Mainland. The call will then be diverted to an accomplice who will pretend to be a Mainland official to perpetuate a fraud. The excuses made by fraudsters are also closely related to current affairs. For instance, during the pandemic, the Police have received deception reports relating to the sale of masks or quarantine matters.

(4) The Police have been adopting all-round strategies to combat frauds on various fronts, including intelligence exchanges, enforcement actions, cross agency co-operation and enhanced publicity and education. To reinforce the

combat against deception and raise the public's anti-deception awareness, the Police's Commercial Crime Bureau established the ADCC in 2017, the duties of which include monitoring and analysing deception trends with a view to formulating and implementing combating strategies; co-ordinating anti-deception publicity work; operating the 24-hour "Anti-Scam Helpline 18222" to provide timely assistance; co-operating with the banking sector to intercept payments to fraudsters so as to minimise the loss of victims; and assisting victims to intercept overseas payments to fraudsters via the "International Stop-Payment Mechanism".

Between January and November 2020, the ADCC received more than 20 000 telephone enquiries, of which about 20 per cent were related to telephone deception. The ADCC provides anti-deception advice to the public and assist those in need to report. It also co-operates with the banking sector to intercept payments to fraudsters, and have successfully intercepted more than HK\$120 million in 185 deception cases where payments have already been made to local and overseas banks. In addition, it has prevented 300 deception cases from happening, 40 per cent of which involve telephone deception.

In view of the transnational nature of deception and money-laundering cases, the ADCC has been co-operating actively with different jurisdictions and has built an extensive network with external counterparts as well as international police authorities to combat such cases. In November 2020, the ADCC and the Police's Designated Subject Team of Telephone Deception attended the meeting of the INTERPOL Anti-Transnational Financial Crime Working Group to exchange intelligence and work experience as well as discuss the way forward with regard to telephone deception matters and the like. The ADCC will continue to enhance the efficacy of tracking and intercepting transnational crime proceeds with overseas judicial authorities through close police co-operation.

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## **LCQ2: Measures to cope with epidemic**

Following is a question by Ir Dr the Hon Lo Wai-kwok and a reply by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, in the Legislative Council today (January 13):

Question:

As the epidemic has raged on in Hong Kong for nearly one year but has not yet been brought under control, various industries have been hard hit, with the unemployment rate soaring. Quite a number of members of the public have pointed out that such a situation stems from the Government's perfunctory anti-epidemic efforts which are inept and piecemeal, and merely deal with problems on an ad hoc basis. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it will, by making reference to the successful anti-epidemic experience on the Mainland, carry out anti-epidemic work under a state-of-war mentality, mobilising and steering the efforts of the whole society towards fighting the epidemic, in order to strive for "zero" infection case as soon as possible; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether the Government will, for the sake of cutting the virus transmission chain as early as possible, consider afresh the implementation of universal compulsory testing and, when necessary, once again request the Central Authorities to send a test support team to Hong Kong to provide assistance; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) given that the universal vaccination programme is massive in scale, involving work in various aspects such as transporting and storing vaccines, setting up vaccination centres, conducting publicity, rebutting rumours, providing vaccination appointment service, keeping vaccination records and handling post-vaccination adverse reactions, of the progress of preparing and the specific work arrangements for the vaccination programme?

Reply:

President,

My reply to the various parts of the question raised by Ir Dr the Hon Lo Wai-kiwok is as follows:

(1) Hong Kong has been extensively affected by COVID-19, a pandemic sweeping across the world. The Special Administrative Region (SAR) Government has remained vigilant and committed to curbing the epidemic through a multi-pronged approach with a view to meeting the target of "Sparing No Effort in Achieving 'Zero Infection'" as put forward by the Chief Executive in the 2020 Policy Address.

In view of the rapidly evolving pandemic, the SAR Government has all along made references to the advice from experts in Hong Kong, the Mainland and the rest of the world in formulating anti-epidemic strategy suitable for Hong Kong based on science and theories. In terms of making reference to the Mainland's anti-epidemic experience, in addition to the regular exchanges between the Department of Health (DH) of the SAR Government and the National Health Commission, the Chief Secretary has also led government officials and expert advisors to attend a meeting to exchange views with Mainland officials and experts in December 2020. By drawing on the Mainland's successful anti-epidemic strategy and experience, it is hoped that the fourth wave of the epidemic in Hong Kong could be put under control as soon as possible. The SAR Government will continue to strengthen exchanges between experts in the Mainland and Hong Kong in order to further enhance the anti-epidemic work in the territory.

(2) With respect to the suggestion that the Government should consider implementing universal compulsory testing, we reiterate that the virus

testing strategy is to continue and expand compulsory testing on a mandatory basis, targeted testing on an obligatory basis and testing on a voluntary basis so as to achieve the objective of "early identification, early isolation and early treatment". Since the commencement of the fourth wave of epidemic from mid-November 2020 to January 6, 2021, the Government has conducted more than 1.9 million tests, of which 3 477 samples tested preliminarily positive (0.18 per cent), successfully cutting silent transmission chains in the community.

Regarding compulsory testing on a mandatory basis, the Government has implemented the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) since November 15, 2020. As at January 11, the Government has required persons who had been to 121 specified premises, symptomatic persons, staff members of residential care homes for the elderly, residential care homes for persons with disabilities and nursing homes, day service units attached to the premises of residential care homes and taxi drivers to undergo compulsory virus testing.

The Government has also actively expanded the scope of compulsory testing on a mandatory basis especially for residential buildings to achieve community clearing. With effect from December 30, 2020, if there are two or more units in a building with confirmed cases in the past 14 days and the units concerned are not epidemiologically linked to each other, the building would be included in the compulsory testing notice under Cap. 599J and persons who had been present at that building for more than two hours in the past 14 days are required to undergo compulsory testing. After the amendment of this criteria, 59 buildings had been included in compulsory testing notices by January 11. To tie in with the expansion of compulsory testing, the Government not only provides free testing services in 19 community testing centres (CTCs) but also set up around 50 mobile specimen collection stations in the vicinity of these buildings to facilitate persons subject to the compulsory testing notices to undergo testing. For the 42 premises subject to compulsory testing notices issued on December 30 and December 31, 2020, as at January 4, around 55 000 persons have received tests through mobile specimen collection stations and CTCs. The Government is also actively preparing to step up enforcement such as conducting blitz operations to demonstrate our determination to enforce the legal requirement of compulsory testing.

For targeted testing on an obligatory basis, the Government also arranges testing for targeted groups based on risk assessment. Testing is currently arranged on a continuous basis for targeted groups including school teachers, staff of restaurants and bars, designated frontline employees of Kwai Tsing Container Terminals. New targeted groups including foreign domestic helpers and workers from construction sites have been added.

On voluntary testing, the Government continues to provide convenient testing service to individuals who perceive themselves as having a higher risk of exposure or experience mild discomfort through various channels, including free testing for the public through 188 distribution points (namely designated general outpatient clinics of the Hospital Authority, 121 post

offices, and vending machines at 20 MTR stations) and 83 collection points. The above three channels can distribute over 40 000 specimen collection packs per day, while the 19 CTCs also have a total daily capacity of more than 20 000 tests.

(3) On vaccines, we have procured three vaccines from different technology platforms through advance purchase agreements. The vaccines are respectively from Sinovac Biotech (Hong Kong) Limited, BioNtech and Fosun Pharma, and AstraZeneca and the University of Oxford. We procured 7.5 million doses of each of the above three vaccines. Under the situation where each person requires two doses, the amount procured is sufficient to cover 1.5 times the Hong Kong population. Having considered that the vaccines have different requirements in transport and storage, the DH has identified suppliers which fulfil the relevant certifications, with a view to ensuring that the vaccines are properly handled once delivered to Hong Kong.

We estimate that starting in February, members of the public can get vaccinated through vaccination programmes led by the Government free of charge. Our goal is to provide vaccines for the majority of the population within 2021. Having considered experts' views, we will provide vaccination for priority groups first, including groups which have higher risks of coming into contact with the COVID-19 virus, groups which have greater mortality rates after contracting the disease, and groups which may easily transmit the virus to others, the vulnerable or weak if infected (e.g. healthcare workers, elders and staff of residential care homes). Furthermore, we are reviewing other target groups which may need to receive vaccination early due to their work nature or other needs, including those who are particularly crucial to the infrastructure and operations of Hong Kong.

In view that the vaccine developed by BioNTech in collaboration with Fosun Pharma has more stringent requirements for transport and storage (the vaccines must be stored in -70 degrees Celsius, and can only survive in a two to eight degrees Celsius environment for five days) and also require thawing procedures, in order to ensure the quality of the vaccines and that the vaccination procedures adhere to requirements, we will set up Community Vaccination Centres in 18 districts in Hong Kong. As regards the other two vaccines, we expect that they will be handled following the arrangements for seasonal influenza in general, under which vaccination will be provided to members of the public through private hospitals and clinics. Members of the public will receive a vaccination card for record after vaccination. The relevant record can be uploaded to the Electronic Health Record Sharing System. The COVID-19 Electronic Testing Record System launched by the Government will also include an "Electronic Vaccination Record" feature for convenient download by the public.

The DH has always had a pharmacovigilance system for handling reports of adverse events that occur after vaccination. The DH will make reference to guidelines from the World Health Organization (WHO), step up monitoring of potential adverse events after vaccination, and keep in view and refer to the safety and efficacy assessment of the vaccines promulgated by the drug regulatory authorities of advance countries and regions and the WHO.

Therefore, the Government is making preparations to set up an Indemnity Fund. In the event members of the public encounter a severe adverse event associated with the administration of a vaccine, the fund will cover the indemnities determined by court or arbitration and can provide in advance part of the indemnities in order to make available financial assistance to the member of the public as early as possible.

As regards the publicity and education work, we will disseminate correct information on vaccines and details on the vaccination programme to the public through various channels, including print, electronic and social media, etc., to enable members of the public to adequately grasp the relevant information before vaccination, as well as understand the principles, formulation, usefulness and side effects of the various vaccines, etc. In fact, there is a dedicated page on the Government's thematic website "Together, We Fight the Virus" that disseminates information on vaccines, including the latest news, frequently asked questions, as well as information charts and short clips, in order to enable the public to grasp the latest information on COVID-19 vaccines. We will also step up monitoring of false information on vaccines within the community and make clarifications and debunk rumours as necessary. We will later set up a thematic website for the vaccination programme, so that members of the public can have one-stop access to correct and the most updated information and messages on vaccines.

Thank you, President.

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## **Subsidy Scheme for Beauty Parlours, Massage Establishments and Party Rooms to open for applications on January 18**

The Government will launch another round of the Subsidy Scheme for Beauty Parlours, Massage Establishments and Party Rooms under the Anti-epidemic Fund on January 18 (Monday). The application period for the Scheme will run from January 18 to January 29 (Friday).

### Beneficiaries

Beauty parlours, massage establishments and party rooms that had suspended operations pursuant to the closure order issued by the Government under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) will be eligible for the Scheme. The Scheme is also applicable to beauty parlours, massage establishments and party rooms operated by social enterprises (SEs). This round of the Scheme will also cover local pleasure vessels let for hire or reward (pleasure vessels). Pleasure vessels holding a valid certificate of

survey or a certificate of inspection and an operating licence on a specified date or within a specified period with condition will be eligible for the Scheme.

#### Subsidy amount

Each eligible beauty parlour or massage establishment will receive a one-off subsidy depending on its number of workers:

Number of workers	Subsidy amount
1 to 2 workers	\$30,000
3 to 4 workers	\$60,000
5 or more workers	\$100,000

The maximum subsidy amount for beauty parlour or massage establishment chain stores operated by a single entity under the same business registration is \$3 million.

Each eligible party room or pleasure vessel will receive a one-off subsidy of \$40,000.

A sum of \$700 million is earmarked under the Fund for the Scheme. It is expected that the subsidy could be disbursed from early next month onwards.

#### Application methods

Beauty parlours, massage establishments and party rooms with business registration

In line with the arrangement for the previous two rounds of the Scheme, a dedicated website ([bmpsubsidy.gov.hk](http://bmpsubsidy.gov.hk)) will be provided to receive online applications from beauty parlours, massage establishments and party rooms with a business registration. Such applicants are required to submit applications and supporting documents through this website. The online application system will commence operation at 9am on January 18. The deadline for application is 11.59pm on January 29.

To streamline the application procedure, a fast-track arrangement is in place for eligible beauty parlours, massage establishments and party rooms which have successfully applied under the last round of the Scheme. Such applicants will not be required to provide business information and other supporting documents afresh in tendering their applications. After inputting their application number under the last round of the Scheme and their business registration number and mobile phone number on the online application system, the system will automatically retrieve their essential business information submitted under the last round of the Scheme. Applicants will be deemed eligible for the Scheme by confirming the accuracy of the information retrieved and that they are still in active business and fulfil all other requirements of the Scheme. The appropriate levels of subsidy that beauty parlours or massage establishments should receive will be determined

based on the number of employees as confirmed in the approval records of the last round.

As for businesses which have not applied under the last round of the Scheme, businesses which have applied under the last round but are pending their application/appeal results, and businesses which have successfully applied under the last round with changes in business information, they will have to submit fresh applications through the online application system.

Beauty parlours, massage establishments and party rooms operated by SEs

SE operators of beauty parlours, massage establishments and party rooms without a business registration should directly approach the Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS) via its hotline (2864 2993) or email ([sebc@hkcss.org.hk](mailto:sebc@hkcss.org.hk)) to obtain its certification and submit their applications. However, SE operators with a business registration should file their applications through the Scheme's dedicated online application website within the application period.

Pleasure vessels

The Marine Department will issue a notification letter to the owners of all eligible pleasure vessels by end January. The Department will handle the relevant procedures and the disbursement of the subsidy. Owners of pleasure vessels do not need to use the online application system to file an application.

Information and enquiries

Details of the eligibility criteria, the terms and conditions of the applications and Frequently Asked Questions will be available on the application website of the Scheme. Applicants are advised to go through this important information before submitting applications. A dedicated telephone hotline (1836 188) and email ([info@bmpsubsidy.hk](mailto:info@bmpsubsidy.hk)) will commence operation at 9am tomorrow (January 14) to handle enquiries on the details of the Scheme. As for enquiries regarding the details of the subsidy for pleasure vessels under the Scheme, owners of pleasure vessels may contact the Marine Department (2852 4931). SEs may contact the HKCSS (2864 2993).