

# Government departments enhance pest control work

The inter-departmental Pest Control Steering Committee (PCSC) held a meeting today (June 22) to review the situation of mosquito proliferation since the start of the rainy season this year, especially as there were multiple rainstorms during the second half of May and the first half of June, and that the monthly gravidtrap index for *Aedes albopictus* may rise significantly in June. The PCSC discussed mosquito prevention and control work to be further enhanced, including co-ordination of frontline staff among departments at the district level, as well as formulation of a series of enhanced surveillance and anti-rodent work targeting the rodent problem in back alleys.

At the meeting, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) reviewed the specific causes leading to the Area Gravidtrap Index exceeding the alert level of 20 per cent in individual surveyed areas this year and the improvement work to be carried out. The FEHD also reminded various departments to pay special attention to environments usually prone to mosquito breeding such as nullahs, keyholes of manholes, sand traps, scaffolding, discarded containers, tree holes and fallen leaves, etc. In addition to the continuous elimination of breeding grounds and regular fogging operations, various departments will update the blackspots of mosquito infestations targeting the above problems and also step up anti-mosquito work. Meanwhile, various departments have put in place about 3 100 highly effective new mosquito traps in areas under their purview.

In addition to taking action after a mosquito or rodent proliferation is found, various departments will also enhance contract management of pest control work to ensure that the frontline workers comply with the Government's technical guidelines and to enhance training. The departments will also strengthen supervision of their service contractors to ensure that the contractors carry out pest control work in accordance with the requirements. Furthermore, various departments will conduct detailed inspections at their venues regularly. They will also adopt a more proactive and stringent approach in management of pest control service contractors, which includes surprise checks to ensure that the pest control work is completed according to the work programme, and to guarantee service quality.

In order to enhance inter-departmental co-ordination at the district level, various departments will assign relatively senior staff to participate in the monthly meetings convened by the FEHD at the district level to report their mosquito prevention and control work, and review the implementation details of their work to supervise their frontline workers to take necessary follow-up actions as soon as possible.

Moreover, the Government reminds the public and property management companies to carry out effective mosquito prevention and control measures

including inspecting their homes and surroundings to remove potential breeding grounds during the current hot and rainy season in Hong Kong. To prevent mosquito-borne diseases, those staying in the natural environment should take appropriate personal protective measures against mosquitoes, such as avoiding staying in the vicinity of shrubby areas for a long time, wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers, and applying DEET-containing insect repellent.

Regarding rodent prevention and control, in addition to routine work, the relevant departments will implement a series of enhanced measures against rodent infestations in back alleys in the second half of this year. In the third quarter this year, the FEHD plans to carry out operations targeting at improper dumping of refuse by food premises in areas in Wan Chai and Kwun Tong where rodent infestation is more severe. Apart from enforcement actions, the FEHD will discuss with the local communities about an extension of opening hours of refuse collection points in the community to facilitate disposal of domestic waste and food refuse by neighbourhoods and small-scale shops nearby. The FEHD and the Home Affairs Department will continue to make referrals to the Highways Department in relation to back alleys that require improvement work with reference to the situation of individual back alleys. The Highways Department has completed 122 improvement work items in back alleys from last year till May this year, including repairing road surfaces or damaged surface channels as well as local repaving. The above-mentioned work by various departments helps eliminate the survival conditions of rodents.

The FEHD is conducting field trials of thermal imaging cameras in about 150 back alleys in Kowloon City for recording rodent activity and its extent. It is also considering formulating a new rodent index targeting rodent infestation in back alleys. Moreover, it will also install thermal imaging cameras before and after the anti-rodent operations in designated target areas in nine districts to record rodent activities. The FEHD will compare the data collected when the operations end in late June with a view to quantifying and reviewing the effectiveness of the operations.

Representatives from three bureaux and 21 departments/organisation attended today's meeting.

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## **Some 31 000 public rental housing units estimated to be available for allocation in 2020-21**

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

The Subsidised Housing Committee of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) today (June 22) approved the estimated public rental housing (PRH) allocation for 2020-21 and was briefed on the actual allocation in 2019-20.

For the year 2019-20, it was originally estimated that 24 100 PRH flats could be allocated but the actual allocation was 17 500 flats (i.e. the number of housing offers accepted and flats taken up by applicants on or before March 31, 2020), achieving a target rate of 72.6 per cent.

"The major reason for the difference in the number of flats allocated was that the Government had to use Chun Yeung Estate (4 846 flats) in Fo Tan as a quarantine centre in response to the rapid and critical development of coronavirus disease 2019. In addition, Fai Ming Estate (952 flats) in Fanling was maliciously and seriously damaged. Furthermore, the completion date of Block 1 of Hoi Tat Estate (852 flats) in West Kowloon was later than the original estimated date and the flats were still not ready for intake by the end of March 2020," a spokesman for the HA said.

For 2020-21, it is estimated that a total of about 31 400 PRH flats, comprising about 14 900 new flats and about 16 500 refurbished flats, will be available for allocation to different categories of applicants. Among them, the largest portion will go to PRH applicants with about 22 000 flats (70.1 per cent) to be allocated to them.

"This estimation is not an upper limit. We will endeavour to allocate more than predicted to PRH applicants within the year if possible, such as in the event that any new PRH estate is completed ahead of schedule. We will also closely monitor the actual allocation figures of other categories to ensure any surplus of demanded flats could be allocated to PRH applicants before the close of the year," the spokesman said.

"The annual allocation quota for non-elderly one-person applicants under the Quota and Points System (QPS) is set at 10 per cent of the total number of flats to be allocated to PRH applicants with an upper limit of 2 200 flats. According to this principle, the allocation quota for QPS applicants in 2020-21 is 2 200 flats. However, if the actual supply of flats turns out to be less than our estimation, we will keep the number of flats allocated to QPS applicants to not more than 10 per cent of the total number of flats to be allocated to PRH applicants."

Moreover, a total of 420 flats will be reserved for the category of clearance rehousing residents affected by clearance projects planned by government departments and organisations concerned, including the development projects in Hung Shui Kiu and Kwu Tung North/Fanling North New Development Area and clearance and resumption projects in Siu Lam, Tuen Mun, as well as the Government's squatter clearances, emergency clearances, unauthorised rooftop structure clearances and so forth, and also for rehousing residents affected by the Urban Renewal Authority's redevelopment projects scheduled for 2020-21.

A total of 2 400 flats (including some of the flats in Pak Tin Estate

Phases 7 and 8 and Wui Chi House of Tung Wui Estate) will also be reserved for the clearance of Blocks 9, 10, 11 and 13 at Pak Tin Estate and Mei Tung House and Mei Po House at Mei Tung Estate.

"In 2020-21, it is estimated that a quota of 2 000 flats will be reserved for the category of Compassionate Rehousing (CR). This figure is not an upper limit and where resources permit, we will follow the established policy to handle all demands for CR as recommended by the Social Welfare Department," the spokesman said.

In addition, 3 580 flats will be set aside for various transfer purposes, including transfer of under-occupation households, full rent exemption for elderly under-occupation transfer, Territory-wide Overcrowding Relief Exercise, the Living Space Improvement Transfer Scheme, the Harmonious Families Transfer Exercise, the conversion programme of Housing for Senior Citizens, and special transfer of individual tenants on medical and/or social grounds.

"We will reserve 1 000 flats under the Civil Service Public Housing Quota Scheme in 2020-21 as in 2019-20," the spokesman said.

"We will closely monitor any changes in the circumstances and will remain flexible in the allocation of PRH flats to ensure optimisation of resources," he added.

For the estimated numbers of PRH flats to be allocated to different categories of applicants in 2020-21, please refer to the attached table.

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## [HA approves arrangements for Sale of HOS Flats 2020 and WSM 2020](#)

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

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) Subsidised Housing Committee (SHC) today (June 22) approved the provisional average selling prices, the arrangements to finalise the average selling prices and sales arrangements for the Sale of Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) Flats 2020 (HOS 2020) and the arrangements for the White Form Secondary Market Scheme (WSM) 2020, as well as the White Form (WF) income and asset limits for the two exercises.

The following four new HOS developments will be put up for sale under HOS 2020, providing a total of 7 047 flats (details are set out in Annex):

1. 806 flats in Choi Wo Court, Sha Tin with saleable areas of about 36.6

- square metres (sq m) to about 57.0 sq m;
2. 3 222 flats in Shan Lai Court, Fanling with saleable areas of about 25.8 sq m to about 41.9 sq m;
  3. 2 079 flats in Kam Chun Court, Ma On Shan with saleable areas of about 28.9 sq m to about 45.9 sq m; and
  4. 940 flats in Kai Cheung Court, Diamond Hill with saleable areas of about 27.4 sq m to about 46.6 sq m.

As at May 31, there were 18 rescinded flats from two HOS developments (Hoi Lok Court and Yu Tai Court ) previously put up for sale in HOS 2018. They will be included for resale in this sale exercise. Apart from them, any additional rescinded flats from HOS 2018 and HOS 2019 as identified up to about one month before the commencement of flat selection will also be included for resale in this sale exercise.

According to the pricing policy on subsidised sale flats (SSF) introduced in 2018, the discount applied to the assessed market value of HOS flats for sale is determined on the basis of the affordability benchmark that at least 75 per cent of the flats for sale are affordable to the non-owner occupier households earning a median monthly household income, assuming that they need to spend no more than 40 per cent of their monthly income on mortgage payments. The discount rate is applicable to both new flats and unsold/rescinded flats put up for sale/resale in the same sale exercise.

"SHC endorsed that, following the above pricing mechanism, the average selling prices of the 7 047 new flats for sale and any unsold/rescinded flats for resale under HOS 2020 are provisionally set at 37 per cent discount from the assessed market values, i.e. for sale at 63 per cent of assessed market values. The provisional selling prices of the flats of the four new developments range from \$1.23 million to \$5.13 million, averaging at about \$2.84 million," a spokesman for the HA said.

"Under the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic situation faces unprecedented challenges. With the rapid change in the economic climate in the past six months, there is a huge downward pressure on household income. As household income is a key in determining the price of the HOS flats, the SHC considered that under this very special circumstance, reference should be made to the latest income figures for April to June 2020 in determining the selling prices so as to take into account the rapid change in the economic climate over this period," the spokesman explained.

"As such, as a one-off special arrangement, the SHC endorsed adopting the above discount rate and average selling prices as a provisional discount rate and average selling prices for the time being. The HA will finalise the discount rate and average selling prices for HOS 2020 when the median monthly household income of non-owner occupier households for April to June 2020 is available from the Census and Statistics Department in late August 2020. Should the relevant income figure drop, the discount rate will be adjusted upward, meaning that the average selling prices will be adjusted downward; but in case the relevant income figure goes up, the HA would not

adjust the discount rate downward, meaning that the average selling prices will not be adjusted upward."

The application period is expected to start in July and balloting will be held in October. Eligible applicants of HOS 2020 will be invited to select HOS flats starting from March 2021.

"To strike a balance in addressing the home ownership aspirations of Green Form (GF) and WF applicants and taking into account that tentatively around 4 700 Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme (GSH) flats would be for sale later this year, the SHC decided to revise the ratio of allocation quota between GF and WF applicants to 40:60 for HOS 2020," the spokesman said.

"The flexibility to re-allocate any remaining quota from the GF queue to the WF queue, and vice versa will be maintained," the spokesman added.

The established order of priority for flat selection will be followed and the flat selection order of eligible applicants will be determined by the application category, quota allocation and ballot results. Absolute priority is applicable to both family and one-person applicants living in public rental housing estates who are affected by the HA's announced clearance programmes and where the target clearance date(s) is/are after the launch date (application commencement date) of this sale exercise.

A quota of 2 100 flats will be set aside for families applying under the Priority Scheme for Families with Elderly Members (Priority Elderly Scheme) who have priority over other family applicants, with GF and WF applicants each taking up 40 per cent and 60 percent respectively. If families under the Priority Elderly Scheme fail to obtain a flat under the quota, they will still have the opportunity to purchase under the "Other Families" category. Within other ordinary GF and WF groups, family applicants have priority over one-person applicants.

The SHC also agreed to set aside 700 flats for one-person applicants, with GF and WF applicants each taking up 40 per cent and 60 per cent respectively, allowing them a reasonable chance to purchase the flats. In case the 700 flats are not fully consumed after all one-person applicants have made selections, the remaining flats will be allocated back to the "Other Families" category.

Noting that the response to the WSM has been persistently strong and the 2019 Policy Address suggested that the HA further raise the annual quota of the scheme, the SHC decided to increase the quota for WSM 2020 to 4 500 while maintaining the allocation ratio for family and one-person applicants at 9:1.

WSM 2020 will be launched together with HOS 2020 and one single application will continue be used to cover the two schemes. Applicants may choose to apply for the HOS or the WSM only or both. Separate balloting will be conducted to determine the priority for flat selections for HOS 2020 and the allocation of quotas under WSM 2020.

Doll houses of typical flats, building models, exhibition panels and other information on the four new developments will be displayed at the HA Customer Service Centre at Lok Fu starting seven days before the commencement and up to the end of the application period. At the same time, sales booklets (sales leaflets for rescinded flats) providing sales arrangements and basic information, including the flat sizes and provisional price ranges of the developments, will also be made available to the public. Sales brochures covering full details of the developments and price lists will be available for public collection at least seven days before commencement of the flat selection period.

In view of the popularity of online applications, the HA will continue to provide online applications (including e-applications, e-payments and e-notifications), in addition to the paper submission channels (paper form, either in person or by post) for HOS 2020 and WSM 2020. The carry-over application arrangement will also continue in HOS 2020 under which GF applicants under the HOS may opt to participate in the next SSF exercise without having to submit a separate application and pay the application fee for that next SSF exercise.

Application fees for the schemes remain to be unchanged: \$250 for HOS 2020 only, \$160 for WSM 2020 only and \$410 for both.

At today's meeting, the SHC also reviewed the WF income and asset limits for HOS 2020 and WSM 2020 according to the established mechanism, and endorsed the WF income and asset limits at \$66,000 per month and \$1,700,000 respectively. According to established practice, the income and asset limits for WF one-person applicants will be set at half of the limits for family applicants, at \$33,000 and \$850,000 respectively.

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## **Anti-epidemic Fund to support vehicle maintenance workshops**

The Government today (June 22) announced that the Anti-epidemic Fund will cover vehicle maintenance workshops by granting a one-off non-accountable subsidy of \$50,000 to each eligible vehicle maintenance workshop. This is to assist vehicle maintenance workshops in coping with the operating pressure under the COVID-19 epidemic. The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) expects to accept applications starting mid-July.

Eligible vehicle maintenance workshops can submit applications regardless of their registration status under the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Maintenance Workshops of the EMSD. Workshops wishing to apply for the subsidy must fulfil the following major criteria including

having operated a vehicle maintenance business in a fixed place (with vehicle working bay(s)) on or before February 1, 2020, and maintaining a business operation on the day of application. As well, applicants will have to provide records of operation of the vehicle maintenance workshops during the period from February 1 to May 31, 2020, e.g. information about the employed vehicle mechanics, vehicle maintenance service records, electricity bills or water bills of the workshops. However, vehicle maintenance workshops that benefited from the Retail Sector Subsidy Scheme under the Anti-epidemic Fund will not be subsidised in this exercise.

Relevant preparation work is underway and the EMSD will soon announce the detailed arrangements, including the application period, application procedures and documents required.

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## **CHP investigates 30 additional confirmed cases of COVID-19**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health has announced that as of 4pm today (June 22), the CHP was investigating 30 additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 1 162 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 1 161 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases announced today involve 15 males and 15 females aged between 1 and 61. All of them had a travel history during the incubation period. The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex.

In addition, the CHP is investigating an overseas case. The case involves a 58-year-old male patient who took flight CX906 (Economy class) on Cathay Pacific from the Philippines arriving in Hong Kong yesterday (June 21). The patient was transferred directly from Hong Kong International Airport upon arrival to Queen Mary Hospital for management. The CHP has contacted the health authority in the Philippines to obtain more information about the case. According to the health authority in the Philippines, the patient had tested positive for COVID-19 on June 20 in the Philippines.

The CHP again urged members of the public to maintain an appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible in their daily lives to minimise the risk of infection. In particular, they should go out less and avoid social activities such as meal gatherings or other gatherings to reduce the chance of contacting infected persons who may not present any symptoms, and minimise the risk of outbreak clusters emerging in the community.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use. After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link [wa.me/85296171823?text=hi](https://wa.me/85296171823?text=hi), they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infections, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or doorknobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;

- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.