

# Approval for first round of applications under Labour Importation Scheme for Construction Sector completed

The approval process for the first round of applications under the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector (the Scheme) has been completed.

The application period for the first round of applications under the Scheme was from July 17 to August 16. Applications for 26 works contracts involving 5 251 quotas for imported labour (including skilled workers, technicians and site supervisory personnel) were received during the period.

After the assessment conducted by the interdepartmental committee comprising representatives from the Development Bureau (DEVB) and relevant government departments, the Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) approved the applications from 20 works contracts involving a total of 4 680 quotas. The remaining six applications were not supported as they failed to meet the basic application requirements of the Scheme (e.g. the application was not submitted by the principal contractor responsible for the contract concerned).

All of the 20 works contracts approved are public sector construction works contracts which meet the requirement of a contract value of not less than HK\$1 billion. The quotas approved fall within the 29 eligible trades of skilled workers and the 18 eligible disciplines of technicians and site supervisory personnel that were identified to be in shortage by the approving authority in consultation with relevant committees.

The relevant public sector construction works contracts include those related to the Three-Runway System of Hong Kong International Airport and its related expansion, hospital development, waste management and sewage facilities, road construction and other building projects.

The approved trades mainly include refrigeration/air-conditioning/ventilation mechanic, fire service mechanic, cement sand mortar worker, woodworker, and bar bender and fixer. Details of the approved trades/disciplines are available at the webpage of the Scheme ([www.devb.gov.hk/en/css](http://www.devb.gov.hk/en/css)).

Together with the 800 quotas previously approved under the Supplementary Labour Scheme, which are to be counted towards the importation quota of the Scheme, a total of 5 480 quotas have been allotted under the Scheme so far.

A spokesperson for the DEVB said, "We expect that the imported labour

approved to work in Hong Kong would alleviate the shortage of manpower in the construction sector and support infrastructure development that will improve people's livelihood and the economy. The DEVB and the Construction Industry Council will continue to collaborate with the industry, including labour unions, to implement multipronged measures including enhancing the training and recruitment of local labour, as well as promoting the wider adoption of innovative technologies in the construction sector."

The Scheme accepts applications on a quarterly basis. The second round of applications is open from October 1 until October 31.

The DEVB announced in June 2023 the introduction of the Scheme to, on the prerequisite of safeguarding the employment of local labour, suitably allow the construction sector to apply for importation of labour. It serves as a supplementary measure to address the shortage of skilled workers, technicians and site supervisory personnel in the construction industry. The Scheme has a quota ceiling of 12 000.