

Auctions of traditional vehicle registration marks to be held on May 4 and 5

The Transport Department today (April 17) announced that two auctions of traditional vehicle registration marks will be held on May 4 and 5 (Saturday and Sunday) in Meeting Room S421, L4 Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wan Chai.

"A total of 320 vehicle registration marks will be put up for public sale at each auction. The lists of marks have been posted at the department's website, www.td.gov.hk," a department spokesman said.

Applicants who have paid a deposit of \$1,000 to reserve a mark for auction should also participate in the bidding (including the first bid at the reserve price of \$1,000). Otherwise, the mark may be sold to another bidder at the reserve price.

People who wish to participate in the bidding at the auction should take note of the following important points:

(a) Successful bidders are required to produce the following documents for completion of registration and payment procedures immediately after the successful bidding:

(i) the identity document of the successful bidder;
(ii) the identity document of the purchaser if it is different from the successful bidder;
(iii) a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation if the purchaser is a body corporate; and
(iv) a crossed cheque made payable to "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" or "The Government of the HKSAR". (For an auctioned mark paid for by cheque, the first three working days after the date of auction will be required for cheque clearance confirmation before processing of the application for mark assignment can be completed.)
Successful bidders can also pay through the Easy Pay System (EPS). Payment by post-dated cheques, cash or other methods will not be accepted.

(b) Purchasers must make payment of the purchase price through EPS or by crossed cheque and complete the Memorandum of Sale of Registration Mark immediately after the bidding. Subsequent alteration of the particulars in the memorandum will not be permitted.

(c) A vehicle registration mark can only be assigned to a motor vehicle which is registered in the name of the purchaser. The Certificate of Incorporation must be produced immediately by the purchaser if a vehicle registration mark purchased is to be registered under the name of a body corporate.

(d) Special registration marks are non-transferable. Where the ownership of a motor vehicle with a special registration mark is transferred, the allocation of the special registration mark shall be cancelled.

(e) The purchaser shall, within 12 months after the date of auction, apply to the Commissioner for Transport for the registration mark to be assigned to a motor vehicle registered in the name of the purchaser. If the purchaser fails to assign the registration mark within 12 months, allocation of the mark will be cancelled and arranged for re-allocation in accordance with the statutory provision without prior notice to the purchaser.

For other auction details, please refer to the Guidance Notes – Auction of Vehicle Registration Marks, which can be downloaded from the department's website, www.td.gov.hk.

LCQ4: Trade between Hong Kong and Taiwan

Following is a question by the Hon Wong Ting-kwong and a written reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, in the Legislative Council today (April 17):

Question:

The Mayor of Kaohsiung City, Taiwan led an economic and trade mission to visit Hong Kong last month to promote the agricultural and fisheries products of Kaohsiung and witness the signing of co-operation agreements between the chambers of commerce of the two places. The Chief Executive has indicated that she welcomes more high-quality agricultural and fisheries products from Kaohsiung to be imported to or re-exported via Hong Kong. She looks forward to further promoting exchanges between Hong Kong and Taiwan as well as developing more room for co-operation. In addition, the Financial Secretary has pointed out that the bilateral trade between Hong Kong and Taiwan grew persistently in each of the past five years, and that there is huge room for further development. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the respective total values of the imports and exports between Hong Kong and Taiwan in each of the past three years and the major types of goods involved respectively;

(2) of the details of the work of the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, Invest Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Economic, Trade and Cultural Office in Taiwan and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council in the past three years

in promoting trade and investment between Hong Kong and Taiwan, together with the amounts of expenditure involved; whether such bodies will take new initiatives in the coming three years to promote further development of trade between Hong Kong and Taiwan; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether it will encourage chambers of commerce and organisations in the community to organise more activities to enhance economic and trade exchanges between Hong Kong and Taiwan; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

(1) In the past three years, the total values of imports and exports between Hong Kong and Taiwan, and the major types of goods involved are tabulated below:

(Value in HK\$ million)

	2016	2017	2018
Domestic Exports (Major types of goods)	1,842 (Jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares, and other articles of precious or semi-precious materials; Metalliferous ores and metal scrap; Professional, scientific and controlling instruments and apparatus)	2,079 (Metalliferous ores and metal scrap; Jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares, and other articles of precious or semi-precious materials; Non-ferrous metals)	2,469 (Metalliferous ores and metal scrap; Jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares, and other articles of precious or semi-precious materials; Non-ferrous metals)

Imports (Major types of goods)	292,072 (Electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof; Telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment; Office machines and automatic data processing machines)	329,678 (Electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof; Telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment; Office machines and automatic data processing machines)	338,445 (Electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof; Office machines and automatic data processing machines; Telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment)
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(2) The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has all along been fostering co-operation between Hong Kong and Taiwan in the areas of trade and investment.

On trade promotion, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) has been actively promoting the commerce and trade co-operation and exchanges between Hong Kong and Taiwan, and encouraging Taiwanese enterprises to co-operate with Hong Kong companies and leverage on Hong Kong's services platform to tap the overseas and Mainland markets. Also, the Taipei Office of the HKTDC often organises various types of promotional activities to provide an interactive platform for enterprises of the two places, thereby creating opportunities for business co-operation. In the past three years, the HKTDC has organised about 200 activities in Hong Kong and Taiwan to promote the economic and trade relations between the two places, including organising Taiwanese enterprises to participate in various exhibitions and forums held in Hong Kong. The HKTDC's relevant expenditure was around \$18.82 million.

The HKTDC will continue to promote trade ties between Hong Kong and Taiwan through organising different activities such as trade fairs, outbound missions, seminars, roadshows and business matching activities, etc. In addition, the HKTDC will put more emphasis on promoting sectors where Hong Kong enjoys advantages, such as logistics, e-commerce and licensing, etc.

On investment promotion, Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK), through its Investment Promotion Unit based in the Hong Kong Economic, Trade and Cultural Office (HKETCO) in Taiwan, directly reaches out to potential companies and promotes the business advantages of Hong Kong through one-to-one meetings as well as various forms of marketing activities. From 2016 to 2018, InvestHK assisted 47 companies from Taiwan to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. In the three financial years of 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19, InvestHK's expenditure on investment promotion work in Taiwan was around \$1.85 million (excluding staff cost and other general expenses which cannot be separately quantified).

InvestHK will maintain its partnership with the Taiwan business community and conduct investment promotion visits to various Taiwan cities. It will reach out to a wide spectrum of companies to encourage them to set up operations in Hong Kong, thereby seizing the business opportunities arising from the Belt and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area development.

In addition, the HKETCO in Taiwan proactively serves as an important bridge between Hong Kong and Taiwan. It promotes contacts and exchanges in respect of economic and trade affairs and investment, etc. between Hong Kong and Taiwan through various channels and in collaboration with the Taiwan Office of the HKTDC and the Hong Kong Business Association in Taiwan (HKBA).

In the past three years, HKETCO organised various activities to promote the strengths of Hong Kong extensively, foster economic and trade collaboration between the two places, and attract Taiwan enterprises to invest in Hong Kong. For example, HKETCO organised on an annual basis the "Hong Kong-Taiwan Economic Co-operation Forum", a series of economic co-operation seminars, and roving exhibitions with different themes. The activities aim at enhancing the Taiwan business community's understanding of Hong Kong as well as strengthening economic and trade collaboration and exchanges between the two places.

Other ongoing measures include liaising with various stakeholders in the industrial and commercial sector of Taiwan to keep them abreast of the latest economic and trade developments in Hong Kong; strengthening connections with Hong Kong businesses in Taiwan through meetings with Hong Kong residents and businessmen working in various industries to share information concerning economic and trade affairs in Hong Kong and Taiwan; supporting HKBA to organise activities for members, visits and tours as well as thematic talks; receiving business delegations visiting Taiwan, introducing the latest developments in the economic and trade relations between Hong Kong and Taiwan as well as providing advice and assistance for their visits; providing support to the visit of the Hong Kong-Taiwan Business Co-operation Committee (BCC) to Taiwan; keeping a close watch on important information relating to economic and trade matters and business operations in Hong Kong and Taiwan, as well as disseminating messages to Hong Kong businesses in Taiwan, industry and commerce associations in Taiwan, and Taiwan enterprises interested in investing in Hong Kong through the monthly "Hong Kong-Taiwan Economic and Trade Newsletter" and ad-hoc issues; and collaborating with major media agencies in Taiwan to publish columns featuring interviews of relevant stakeholders from Hong Kong and Taiwan in order to promote Hong Kong's strengths in respect of business operations and investment.

In future, HKETCO will continue to take forward the above work to further strengthen exchanges and collaboration between Hong Kong and Taiwan in respect of economic and trade affairs and investment, etc. Such duties are part of the work of HKETCO and a separate breakdown of the expenditure is not available.

(3) We have all along been encouraging exchanges between the Hong Kong and

Taiwan business sectors. The BCC was established on April 1, 2010. With members coming from the local business sector, the BCC endeavours to promote people-to-people exchanges between Hong Kong and Taiwan, and strengthen commerce and economic co-operation between the two places. The BCC has been established for eight years, and has organised and participated in over 140 events, including organising visits for BCC members to Taiwan to network with local companies, organising forums and meetings, etc., to foster exchanges and co-operation between the Hong Kong and Taiwan business sectors and explore business opportunities.

LCQ8: Lifeguards employed by Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Following is a question by the Hon Ma Fung-kwok and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, in the Legislative Council today (April 17):

Question:

Regarding civil service lifeguards and non-civil service contract seasonal lifeguards employed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the respective (i) staffing establishments, (ii) strengths and (iii) vacancy rates of the two types of lifeguards in each of the past two years, with a breakdown by the District Council district to which the public swimming pool complexes/beaches that they were stationed belong, as well as by peak and non-peak season;

(2) in respect of the public swimming pool complexes and beaches under the LCSD, of the respective numbers of days in each of the past two years on which they (i) were partially closed and (ii) were completely closed/had lifeguard services suspended, due to an insufficient number of lifeguards on duty, with a breakdown by the cause for the insufficient number of lifeguards on duty (e.g. quite a number of lifeguards taking sick leave or industrial actions);

(3) as some lifeguards have relayed that they have been assigned to carry out tasks unspecified in their terms of employment, e.g. handling oil spills and carrying out scuba diving rescue and search operations, whether the LCSD will, when conducting recruitment exercises in future, consider specifying in detail in the terms of employment the duties of lifeguards (including whether they are required to carry out the two tasks);

(4) whether the LCSD will require that all lifeguards must complete the following training courses: (i) the course on advanced skills of skin diving

rescue under the induction training programme (with the requirement of passing a five-metre depth diving test), and (ii) the in-service training course on scuba diving rescue which is currently provided only to civil service lifeguards; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(5) as a seasonal lifeguard who had not possessed a recognised diving qualification was drowned in September last year while undertaking a diving task, whether the LCSD will review the arrangements for lifeguards to carry out diving tasks, and formulate relevant work guidelines (including the requirement for conducting regular drills and the procedure for carrying out diving rescue and search operations); if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

At present, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) manages 44 public swimming pools and 41 gazetted beaches. Lifeguard services are provided at public swimming pools and 38 beaches. In addition to civil service lifeguards, non-civil service contract (NCSC) seasonal lifeguards are also employed on a seasonal basis to augment the manpower of lifeguards during the swimming season. My reply to Hon Ma Fung-kwok's question is as follows:

(1) The staff establishment, strength and percentage of vacancy of lifeguards for the LCSD's public swimming pools/beaches in the past two years with breakdown by district are set out at Annex 1.

(2) The numbers of days on which public swimming pools were fully or partially temporarily closed and lifeguard services at gazetted beaches were suspended due to inadequate lifeguards in the past two years are set out at Annex 2 and Annex 3 respectively.

(3) The major responsibilities of civil service lifeguards include lifesaving and first aid, assisting in law enforcement and maintaining order and assisting in cleansing work, while the major responsibilities of full-time NCSC seasonal lifeguards include ensuring swimmers' safety, lifesaving, maintaining order and assisting in cleansing work. Major responsibilities of lifeguards are clearly spelt out in recruitment advertisements and annual performance appraisals of lifeguards. Besides, LCSD venue staff will brief newly posted lifeguards on their duties and work.

(4) All civil service lifeguards of the LCSD possess the Pool Lifeguard Award and Beach Lifeguard Award. As underwater rescue by skin diving is already an item assessed for the relevant Lifeguard Awards, all lifeguards have already possessed the skin diving skills for underwater rescue operation to perform daily lifesaving tasks. Besides, the LCSD provides course on advanced skills of skin diving rescue for all newly recruited lifeguards and serving civil service lifeguards so as to enhance their skills in skin diving and underwater search and rescue, and familiarise them with the relevant safety rules and the use of skin diving gear, such as fins, diving masks, snorkels

etc. The course on advanced skills of skin diving rescue is one of the induction training programmes for lifeguards. Starting from 2019, the LCSD will arrange for newly appointed civil service lifeguards and NCSC lifeguards on long-term employment to complete part of the induction training programme before assuming duties, including the course on advanced skills of skin diving rescue. Upon completion of the course on advanced skills of skin diving rescue and passing a five-metre depth diving test, coupled with regular drills at swimming pools/beaches, lifeguards should possess sufficient skin diving skills and physical competence to work as a team to carry out search and rescue operation in deep water at swimming pools/beaches.

Although scuba diving is not one of the major responsibilities of lifeguards, under urgent circumstances, say before the arrival of diving personnel of the Fire Services Department (FSD), trained and qualified beach lifeguards will carry out emergency underwater search using scuba diving equipment under the supervision and direction of senior lifeguards while awaiting the arrival of the diving personnel of FSD. The LCSD does not require lifeguards to possess any qualification on scuba diving mandatorily. To enhance the knowledge and skills of lifeguards, the LCSD provides course on rescue skills with scuba diving to serving civil service lifeguards. The course aims at providing lifeguards with training in scuba diving skills and underwater search and rescue using scuba diving equipment. It also covers knowledge in marine environment, the relevant safety rules and contingency measures etc. The LCSD has been providing adequate training places for courses on scuba diving rescue for serving civil service lifeguards. The actual number of training places depends on the number of applicants for the courses. Civil service lifeguards posted to beaches and water sports centres have priority in joining such courses.

(5) The LCSD has put in place various measures to ensure that lifeguards understand and be familiar with their roles and duties, and provides related support, including:

(i) the LCSD has drawn up guidelines on the management of swimming pools and beaches, which require officers-in-charge to brief newly posted lifeguards on their duties in detail to ensure that all lifeguards are familiar with the use of lifesaving facilities and equipment of the venue and that they know well the accident-prone areas and the safety rules for swimmers etc. Senior lifeguards are required to give instructions on the use of lifesaving equipment.

(ii) the departmental guidelines require all lifeguards to participate in regular rescue drills (including diving training) and drills for rescue plans at their workplace to ensure that they are familiar with the corresponding rescue operation under different circumstances.

(iii) officers-in-charge of swimming pools and beaches are required to manage and arrange for maintenance of diving equipment and gears at their venues.

(iv) the courses on skin diving and scuba diving provided by the LCSD have already covered areas on the relevant safety rules, points to note,

maintenance and repair requirements for equipment etc.

Having regard to the concerns expressed by some lifeguards about diving duties, the LCSD will further review the situation and draw up more detailed guidelines on scuba-diving duties for the staff.

LCQ1: Hong Kong's tourist receiving capability

Following is a question by the Hon Gary Fan and a written reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, in the Legislative Council today (April 17):

Question:

It has been reported that in recent years, quite a number of countries and cities (e.g. Japan, Venice in Italy, Edinburgh in Scotland and Queenstown in New Zealand) have introduced or planned to introduce various kinds of tourism taxes (e.g. departure tax and entry tax on same-day visitors) to cope with the problem of too many visitors and use the revenue generated therefrom to enhance the local environment. The Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture of Macao has indicated recently that the Macao Government is open-minded about introducing a tourism tax and will proceed to study this subject. Some members of the public have pointed out that the continuous rise in the number of visitor arrivals to Hong Kong (with the number of arrivals last year exceeding 65 million) has caused nuisances to their daily lives and overloaded the various tourism and infrastructure facilities. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of reports received by the Government in each of the past five years on the wear and tear of the various tourism and infrastructure facilities caused by the reception of too many visitors, and the public expenditure incurred on the repair and maintenance of such facilities;

(2) as it has been over five years since the completion in 2013 of the Assessment Report on Hong Kong's Capacity to Receive Tourists, whether the Government will conduct afresh an assessment of Hong Kong's capacity to receive visitors (including conducting public consultation and studying the imposition of a ceiling on the number of visitors to Hong Kong); if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(3) whether it will resume the imposition of the Hotel Accommodation Tax under the Hotel Accommodation Tax Ordinance (Cap 348) to curb the excessive growth in the number of visitors to Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(4) as same-day and overnight visitors alike use local resources provided for receiving visitors but the per capita spending of the former is far lower than that of the latter, whether the Government will study the imposition of an entry tax on same-day visitors and use the revenue generated therefrom to meet the expenditure on cleaning, repair and enhancement of local tourism and infrastructure facilities; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In response to the question raised by the Hon Gary Fan, with relevant bureaux and departments consulted, my consolidated reply is as follows.

The Government attaches great importance to the sustainable and healthy development of the tourism industry. Whilst ensuring that the industry brings about benefits to society, the Government also continuously seeks to minimise as far as possible the impact of tourist activities on the local community.

The tourist receiving capability of a tourism destination depends on many different factors, including the travel modes of visitors from various source markets, the attractions and facilities of the travel destination, the types of tourism products available in the market, etc. Furthermore, there is no universally accepted way to set a cap on tourist receiving capability. The Government will continue to be proactive in enhancing Hong Kong's various ancillary tourism facilities, so as to increase the city's tourist receiving capability and balance the impact of the tourism industry on the economy and people's livelihood.

Tourism facilities, infrastructures and public facilities in Hong Kong are open for the use by the general public and tourists. The Government does not maintain the number of reports on the wear and tear of such facilities as a result of use by tourists, and can hardly quantify the expenditure on repair and maintenance of such facilities arising from use by tourists. The Government has no plan to adjust the hotel accommodation tax rate or levy new tax on tourists.

Constitution and Basic Law Parent-child Workshop to be held from April 21 to 22

The Constitution and Basic Law Parent-child Workshop organised by the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau will be held on Sunday and Monday (April 21 and 22) at the ground floor atrium of Marina Square West at 12A

South Horizon Drive, Ap Lei Chau.

Apart from colourful exhibition panels, the event will feature interesting handicraft workshops and interactive story-telling sessions for children to gain a better understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law.

The workshops and story-telling sessions will be conducted in Cantonese and will take place from 11am to 7pm. Children aged 6 to 12 and their parents are welcome. While admission is free, seats are limited and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

For event details, please visit www.basiclawevent.com.