

Regional flag day today

Three charities have been issued Public Subscription Permits to hold flag sales from 7am to 12.30pm today (December 29). They are, on Hong Kong Island, Hong Kong Adventure Corps Limited; in Kowloon, People Service Centre Limited; and in the New Territories, the Federation of New Territories Youth Foundation Limited, a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said.

Arrangements have been made with the charities to help people distinguish between the three flag-selling activities.

Information on the three flag-selling organisations on December 29 is as follows:

Region	Name of Organisation	Colour of Collection Bag	Colour of Flag
Hong Kong Island	Hong Kong Adventure Corps Limited	Red	Green
Kowloon	People Service Centre Limited	Orange	Green
New Territories	The Federation of New Territories Youth Foundation Limited	Yellow	White

For enquiries, please call the SWD's hotline on 2343 2255, or the Charitable Fund-raising Control Team on 2832 4311 during office hours. Information on the flag days of the month is available at the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_whatsnew). Permits for flag days containing contact information of the flag-selling organisations and information on the approved flag-selling activities have also been uploaded to the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_controlofc/sub_recentlyap). For enquiries about the detailed flag-selling arrangements, please contact the individual flag-selling organisations.

Details of the charitable fund-raising activities covered by Public Subscription Permit issued by the SWD have also been uploaded to the GovHK website (www.gov.hk/fundraising).

In the case of suspected fraudulent flag day activities, people should not make any donation and should immediately report the matter to the Police, the spokesman added.

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session at Hong Kong International Airport (with video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session at the Hong Kong International Airport today (December 28):

Reporter: Mrs Lam, what do you think of the criticism against SJ, saying that she is evasive and not convincing enough? Do you yourself think it has been politicised? Secondly, do you think the public perception of the DoJ has been affected by this case?

Chief Executive: First of all, I have explained and clarified that there is no question of the Secretary for Justice being evasive, the question is – I have approved her leave from the 15th of December to the 26th of December, both days inclusive. And she has informed me that she would be out of Hong Kong throughout the whole period. So without her physical presence, there is no opportunity for her to respond to questions. And I did contact her because you remember that on the 15th of December, before I departed for my duty report in Beijing, I did say that if some Legislative Council members and society have questions and they want more information, then maybe I believed that the Secretary for Justice would be happy to respond. That was on the 15th of December. Then I realised that she was not in Hong Kong and was on leave approved by me. After my reporting of duty and before I departed for my own leave, I did manage to contact her, when she was not in Hong Kong. But she explained to me that actually the statement that the Department of Justice issued on the 12th of December was more or less the whole thing that she could say, and that was also on the advice of the Prosecutions Division. That was all that she could say. She had very little to add or supplement to what has been contained in the press release. And when she came back from leave, standing right here, on the 26th of December, that was the first occasion when she was back in Hong Kong and she was standing here to comment, although you would say that there was little substantive in her comments because she just could not say more on this particular case, especially now that apparently there is a judicial review application against her decision, so the whole matter is now into a judicial process that makes it even more difficult for the Secretary for Justice or colleagues of the Department of Justice to provide any more information. Now as far as the perception, of course as a political officer for many years, I do realise that public perception is important and that is why in this term of government, I have been advocating transparency that we should attend Legislative Council and do explanation but that doesn't mean that we should allow issues which are supposed to be not subject to interference to be unduly interfered and that is prosecution decision. So, we have to stand by principles and they are very important principles underpinning the rule of law in Hong Kong. So on this particular case, I respect the professional decision made by the Secretary

for Justice and her colleagues and I support her decision based on her legal expertise and very rich experience over many years.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

Government officers met trade representatives on contingency plans for African Swine Fever

The Government officers today (December 28) met local pig farmers and stakeholders related to supply chain of live pigs on preventive measures and contingency plans to guard against the spreading of African Swine Fever (ASF) to Hong Kong, culling arrangements under different scenarios as well as the Government's assistance to the trade and compensation for culling of pigs.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) briefed local pig farmers this afternoon at the Tai Lung Experimental Station on the Government's plans. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) also met representatives of the trade and the relevant stakeholders, including slaughterhouse operators, livestock agents, buyers and meat transportation companies, in the Sheung Shui Slaughterhouse this afternoon to explain to them the related arrangements.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau (FHB) said, "Today's meetings effectively allowed all the parties to exchange views on the contingency plans so as to get well prepared for prevention of ASF. We welcome local pig farmers' support for the contingency plans including the culling arrangements, and their continued co-operation with the Government closely on taking preventive measures."

"ASF is not a zoonotic disease and will not be transmitted to human, hence posing no food safety risk. Well-cooked pork and pork products are safe for consumption. As ASF could cause massive infection and death in pigs within a short period of time, the relevant Government departments have been closely monitoring the latest developments of ASF, heightening vigilance and implementing the corresponding measures since the first ASF case occurred on the Mainland in August this year.

"The Government has made reference to the prevention and control guidelines and experience of the World Organisation for Animal Health and in various places including the European Union and on the Mainland, and also taken into account the situation of local pig rearing industry and slaughterhouse operation when strengthening the preventive measures and devising contingency plans. The Government also seeks expert advice from time

to time along the way. The Government has been maintaining liaison with the local pig rearing sector and gradually implementing various preventive measures, such as deepening the trade's understanding of ASF as well as enhancing cleansing and disinfection in different areas of live pig supply, in a bid to protect the local pig rearing industry and prevent ASF from spreading into local pig farms. All imported and local pigs have to undergo ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections in slaughterhouses to ensure that pigs supplied to the market are fit for human consumption.

"The Mainland authorities exercise stringent inspection and quarantine on live pigs for supply to Hong Kong. So far, there has been no ASF in any registered pig farms supplying Hong Kong (registered farm). If a registered farm were to be infected with ASF or located within or near to the ASF infected area, its supply of live pigs would be suspended. We will continue to closely liaise with the relevant Mainland authorities to strive to maintain steady supply of live pigs to Hong Kong," the spokesman added.

FEHD also releases on its website daily information on the quantity and auction price of live pigs supplied and the estimated number of live pigs to be supplied on the following day, which has helped enhance the transparency and effective operation of the market. Website:

www.fehd.gov.hk/english/sh/index.html

Culling arrangements

According to the contingency plan for local pig farms, in the event to ASF infection, all pigs in that farm will be culled, and the farm will be cleansed and disinfected thoroughly. Restocking of pigs for business resumption could only take place upon inspection to the satisfaction of veterinary surgeons. AFCD will also block and prohibit the movement of pigs of other farms within three kilometres of the infected farm, and closely monitor the situation. If any pig in those farms were found to be infected with ASF, all pigs therein will also be culled. AFCD has devised the procedures for culling in a humane manner.

Incubation period of ASF is at least four days, i.e. 96 hours. ASF virus may be found in slaughterhouses in three scenarios. First, live pigs have been supplied to a slaughterhouse by a local pig farm or a registered farm within 96 hours prior to the identification of ASF in that farm. Second, a consignment of pigs from a local pig farm or a registered farm on the way to a slaughterhouse is found to be infected, but those pigs have yet to come into contact with other pigs in the slaughterhouse. Third, a pig in the lairage in a slaughterhouse is found to be infected.

In the first scenario, if pigs have been supplied to a slaughterhouse by an infected farm within 96 hours prior to the identification of ASF, all pigs from that farm remaining in the slaughterhouse will be culled. Other pigs in the slaughterhouse will be subject to thorough examination by veterinary surgeons. Sampled testing will be conducted if necessary, such as when the pigs are suspected to be infected. The pigs will be slaughtered and supplied to the market only after they are confirmed to be not infected. The slaughterhouse concerned will be thoroughly cleansed and disinfected after

clearance.

In the second scenario, the whole consignment of pigs will be culled. As for other pigs, thorough examination will be conducted by the veterinary surgeons, and sampled testing will be conducted if necessary, such as when the pigs are suspected to be infected. The pigs will be slaughtered and supplied to the market only after they are confirmed to be not infected. The slaughterhouse concerned will be thoroughly cleansed and disinfected after clearance.

In the third scenario, all pigs in the slaughterhouse will be culled. The slaughterhouse will be thoroughly cleansed and disinfected after clearance. As the infected pig may come from either a local farm or a registered farm, or may be infected after entering the slaughterhouse, AFCD will block the movement of pigs of those local farms which have supplied pigs to the slaughterhouse within 96 hours prior to the identification of ASF and carry out an in-depth investigation, until it can rule out the possibility that the local farms concerned are infected. As for the registered farms which have supplied pigs to the slaughterhouse within 96 hours prior to the identification of ASF, the Centre for Food Safety of FEHD will notify the Mainland authorities concerned.

Enhanced preventive measures

As to local pig farms, AFCD implements various preventive measures against ASF, including disseminating information to the trade and pig farmers about prevention against ASF via different channels (e.g. seminars, letters etc.) with a view to raising their awareness on disease precautions. AFCD requests pig farmers to implement proper biosecurity measures, strictly control the access of vehicles and personnel to pig farms, enhance cleansing and disinfection of vehicles and personnel entering and leaving pig farms and carefully handle excrement.

Apart from stepping up inspection to all pig farms, AFCD has also amended the licence conditions for livestock keeping to ban the storage or use of swill of pork origin or in contact with pork or pork products as feed from January 12, 2019. Pig farmers could apply for financial assistance and loan from AFCD if necessary to purchase facilities for strengthening biosecurity, such as high pressure jets and equipment required for switching to use formulated feed, etc. In addition, the importation of breeding pigs from the Mainland has also been suspended since September this year.

Currently, the local slaughterhouses adopt stringent bio-security measures, including cleansing and disinfection of the slaughterhouses and vehicles entering and leaving the slaughterhouses so as to prevent spreading of ASF virus inside the slaughterhouses or to local pig farms via vehicles. Since live pigs usually will not be kept in the slaughterhouse for more than two days before they are slaughtered while the incubation period of ASF virus is at least 96 hours, the chance of cross infection among pigs is very slim.

Moreover, according to the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap

132), it is an offence to import meat into Hong Kong without a health certificate issued by an issuing entity from the place of origin or prior written permission from FEHD. Offenders are liable on conviction to a fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment.

FEHD and the Customs and Excise Department have stepped up cooperation to crack down on illegal importation of meat by passengers into Hong Kong. Between January and November this year, the Government has brought 294 prosecutions and issued 125 warning letters on the cases concerned. Moreover, FEHD has enhanced publicity by posting posters at control points and disseminating information via social media to promote the message that it is an offence to carry raw meat into Hong Kong without a health certificate.

Information about ASF

More information about ASF is available at the websites of the Food and Health Bureau, AFCD and FEHD for access by the public.

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected dangerous drugs \(with photos\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs seized a total of about 800 grams of suspected methamphetamine and 1.4 kilograms of suspected liquid cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$1.95 million at Hong Kong International Airport on December 26.

Customs officers inspected an air mail parcel from Malaysia on December 26. Four packets of suspected methamphetamine were found concealed inside the false compartment of the carton box of the parcel. After follow-up investigation, Customs officers yesterday (December 27) arrested a 31-year-old woman suspected to be in connection with the case in Mong Kok.

Also, a 22-year-old female passenger arrived in Hong Kong from Sao Paulo, Brazil via Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in the afternoon on December 26. During Customs clearance, the batch of suspected liquid cocaine was found concealed inside the underwear worn by her. The woman was then arrested.

The two arrested women were each charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug. They will appear at West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (December 29).

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking

activities to the Customs 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



[HAD opens temporary cold shelters](#)

In view of the cold weather, the Home Affairs Department has opened 18 temporary shelters today (December 28) for people in need of the service.

The temporary shelters will remain open during the daytime tomorrow (December 29) when the cold weather warning is still in force.

To ensure that cold shelter users can rest in a quiet and undisturbed environment, members of the public or agencies wishing to make donations to shelter users are requested to register with the staff of the shelter first. Donors will then be directed to place the donation items at a specified indoor location. The staff will help notify the shelter users to collect the items on their own.

Anyone seeking temporary refuge or with any questions about the donation arrangement in the cold shelters may call the department's hotline 2835 1473 for more information.

The 18 temporary cold shelters are located at:

Hong Kong Districts:

Central and Western –

Sai Ying Pun Community Complex Community Hall
3/F, Sai Ying Pun Community Complex, 2 High Street, Sai Ying Pun

Eastern –

Causeway Bay Community Centre

7 Fook Yum Road, Causeway Bay

Southern –

Lei Tung Community Hall
Lei Tung Estate, Ap Lei Chau

Wan Chai –

Wan Chai Activities Centre
LG/F, Wan Chai Market, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai

Kowloon Districts:

Kowloon City –

Hung Hom Community Hall
1/F, Kowloon City Government Offices, 42 Bailey Street, Hung Hom

Kwun Tong –

Lam Tin (West) Estate Community Centre
71 Kai Tin Road, Lam Tin

Sham Shui Po –

Nam Cheong District Community Centre
1 Cheong San Lane, Sham Shui Po

Wong Tai Sin –

Tsz Wan Shan (South) Estate Community Centre
45 Wan Wah Street, Tsz Wan Shan

Yau Tsim Mong –

Henry G Leong Yaumatei Community Centre
60 Public Square Street, Yau Ma Tei

New Territories:

Islands –

Tung Chung Community Hall
G/F, Tung Chung Municipal Services Building,
39 Man Tung Road, Tung Chung

Kwai Tsing –

Tai Wo Hau Estate Community Centre
15 Tai Wo Hau Road, Kwai Chung

North –

Cheung Wah Community Hall
Cheung Wah Estate, Fanling

Sai Kung –

Hang Hau Community Hall

G/F, Sai Kung Tseung Kwan O Government Complex,
38 Pui Shing Road, Hang Hau, Tseung Kwan O

Sha Tin –
Lung Hang Estate Community Centre
Lung Hang Estate, Sha Tin

Tai Po –
Tai Po Community Centre
2 Heung Sze Wui Street, Tai Po

Tsuen Wan –
Lei Muk Shue Community Hall
G/F, Hong Shue House, Lei Muk Shue Estate, Tsuen Wan

Tuen Mun –
Butterfly Bay Community Centre
Butterfly Estate (near Tip Sum House), Tuen Mun

Yuen Long –
Long Ping Community Hall
Long Ping Estate, Yuen Long