

## Green turtles returned to sea (with photos)

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) released three green turtles in the southern waters of Hong Kong today (July 27).

One of the green turtles was seized by the AFCD in an earlier enforcement operation, while the other two were rescued in the waters near Sha Tau Kok and Siu Sai Wan respectively. The three green turtles were then accommodated temporarily at Ocean Park Hong Kong (OPHK). They were assessed by veterinarians of OPHK and were under constant monitoring and veterinary care.

An AFCD spokesman said, "The three green turtles released today weighed 10 kg, 11 kg and 93kg respectively, and their carapace length measured about 43 cm, 45 cm and 92 cm. All of them were assessed by veterinarians of OPHK as being in good condition and ready to be returned to the sea. The department is thankful to the veterinarians and staff of OPHK for taking care of them."

Before the green turtles were released to the sea, the AFCD had tagged each of them with a microchip and Inconel tags for future identification. Satellite transmitters were also attached to the carapaces of the turtles. By tracking the movement and feeding grounds of green turtles in the sea, the AFCD can collect data for formulating appropriate conservation measures and will share its findings with other conservation authorities for the better conservation of green turtles through concerted efforts.

The green turtle is a globally endangered species and is to date the only sea turtle species known to nest locally. In Hong Kong, all wild turtles (including sea turtles) are protected by the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170). No person shall, except in accordance with a special permit, hunt or wilfully disturb, sell or export, possess or control sea turtles (including nests and eggs). Otherwise, they will be liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for one year. The specimens will also be forfeited upon conviction.

In addition, all sea turtle species are listed in Appendix I to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and regulated under the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586) in Hong Kong. The import, export, re-export or possession of specimens of endangered species not in accordance with the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance is an offence. The maximum penalty is a fine of \$10 million and imprisonment for 10 years, and the specimens will also be forfeited upon conviction.

Members of the public are urged to report any sighting of sea turtles or suspected irregularities involving sea turtles to the AFCD via 1823.



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## [SCED visits Sai Kung District](#)

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, visited Sai Kung District today (July 27) to get a better grasp of the district's latest developments. He toured the waterfront in Sai Kung town centre, paid a visit to Kau Sai Chau, and met with members of the Sai Kung District Council (SKDC).

Mr Yau first travelled to Sai Kung town centre and took the opportunity to observe ferry services for travellers at the Sai Kung Public Pier. He also visited the Sai Kung Public Transport Interchange to learn about the ancillary transport facilities for citizens and visitors to Sai Kung, which is branded as the "Back Garden of Hong Kong". He then proceeded to Area 4 of Sai Kung, where the Government has planned projects including a sports centre and Town Plaza for provision of various leisure and sports facilities to residents of Sai Kung District.

Mr Yau then made a visit to Kau Sai Chau by ferry and observed Sharp

Island during the ride. Sharp Island, covered by unique rocky outcrops, is part of the Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark and one of the popular tourist attractions in Sai Kung District. He said he was pleased to learn that the reconstruction of Sharp Island Pier is expected to complete within the first quarter next year. The new pier will be able to accommodate larger vessels and allow more members of the public and visitors to explore the unique landforms of the Geopark.

Mr Yau said that the Government released the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry in October 2017. One of the strategies is to nurture and develop tourism products and initiatives with local and international characteristics, which in turn includes promoting green tourism by enhancing supporting facilities at popular hiking trails and those with good tourism potential. The Government will continue to maintain close collaboration with the Hong Kong Tourism Board and the trade to enhance the infrastructure and services of Hong Kong's tourism industry so as to reinforce Hong Kong's position as the most preferred destination in Asia.

Kau Sai Chau is located in the Sai Kung Volcanic Rock Region of the Geopark. Mr Yau inspected the facilities and improvement works of Kau Sai Village Pier and also visited other ancillary facilities in Kau Sai Village. He noted that the Kau Sai Chau Village Office will be converted into a story room, which will illustrate the history and culture of Kau Sai Village and serve as a visitor centre to promote the Geopark.

Before concluding the district visit, Mr Yau met with SKDC members to exchange views on district matters relating to transport, tourism, broadband services and local economic development.

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## **SLW visits North District**

The Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, visited North District today (July 27), where he toured elderly facilities promoting active ageing and met with District Council members.

Accompanied by the Chairman of the North District Council (NDC), Mr So Sai-chi, and the District Officer (North), Mr Chong Wing-wun, Dr Law went to Ellen Li District Elderly Community Centre (DECC) of the Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association (HKYWCA) in Fanling to learn about a primary care programme provided by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for the elderly. Jointly organised by the DECC with Cheer Lutheran Centre and Fung Ying Seen Koon Cheung Wah Neighbourhood Elderly Centre, the programme arranges for volunteers to conduct free health checks of elderly persons for early identification of risks of disease and follow-up treatment. The programme's outreach teams also visit elderly persons in rural areas and conduct body checks for them. The programme is funded by the Jockey Club Age-friendly City Project.

Dr Law said that the programme tied in with the Government's policy objectives to strengthen community care and promote "ageing in place". He pointed out that the NGOs concerned have been providing holistic care and support services for the elderly over the years, building a neighbourhood mutual help network which is important social capital in the community.

He then visited the HKYWCA Farm of Healthy Ageing in Fanling. Operated by retired elderly volunteers, the farm grows crops and organises farming activities from time to time for elderly persons to unleash their potential. Dr Law noted that the farming work was all shared among elderly persons, exemplifying their sense of self-worth and promoting active ageing.

Prior to visiting the above facilities, Dr Law met with NDC members to discuss labour and welfare matters.

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## **Special traffic arrangements on Hong Kong Island**

Police will implement special traffic arrangements to facilitate a public procession to be held on Hong Kong Island this Sunday (July 29).

The following roads will be intermittently closed from 4pm until the crowd has dispersed and traffic resumes normal:

- Des Voeux Road Central;
- Eastbound Queensway between Des Voeux Road Central and Rodney Street;
- Rodney Street; and
- If necessary, the fast lane of Garden Road flyover.

Vehicles may not be permitted to access or leave the car parks along the procession route during the road closure period.

Actual implementation of the traffic arrangements will be made depending on traffic and crowd conditions in the area. Motorists are advised to exercise tolerance and patience and take heed of instructions of the Police on site.

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## **"Hong Kong Taxi Service Standard" and**

# [“Hong Kong Taxi Service Guidelines” Launched today \(with photos\)](#)

The Transport Department (TD) and the Committee on Taxi Service Quality (CTSQ) held a promulgation event today (July 27) to launch the new "Hong Kong Taxi Service Standard" and "Hong Kong Taxi Service Guidelines" at the TD headquarters. The TD and the CTSQ also invited taxi trade representatives to join the event to promote the new service standard and guidelines and to call for their support and compliance with them.

Speaking at the event, the Commissioner for Transport, Ms Mable Chan, said that the CTSQ, established in early January this year to enhance the service quality of some 18 000 existing taxis, has already made good progress in its work. It has proposed a series of measures, which include launching the new "Hong Kong Taxi Service Standard" and "Hong Kong Taxi Service Guidelines", enhancing training courses on in-service taxi drivers' service quality in phases at the end of 2018, reviewing the existing sanctions for various taxi malpractices and introducing measures to commend taxi drivers for their quality services. The Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, said at the Legislative Council Transport Panel meeting on Wednesday (July 25) that the government, in collaboration with the taxi trade, will organise training and launch publicity and education campaigns, such as a taxi driver commendation scheme, to enhance the service quality of taxis.

Meanwhile, the TD and the CTSQ will continue to improve the existing mechanism for handling complaints about taxi services; and encourage the trade to leverage technology to enhance operational efficiency and service quality, such as setting up or integrating taxi hailing application platforms. Also, the TD is drafting guidelines on the installation of a CCTV system in taxi compartments on a voluntary basis for the trade's reference.

Ms Chan appealed to the taxi trade to work together and forge ahead with efforts to enhance taxi service quality, and to improve the image of the taxi trade with a view to providing passengers with satisfactory and pleasant journeys.

The "Hong Kong Taxi Service Standard" and "Hong Kong Taxi Service Guidelines" are complementary. The TD hopes that the new standard and guidelines give clearer information to taxi drivers, taxi owners, agents and passengers so as to enhance the standard of taxi service.

The two documents set out the proper conduct and obligations as well as matters of concern that different stakeholders should pay attention to under the current legislation and the actual operation of the taxi trade.

The "Hong Kong Taxi Service Standard" emphasises nine key points on taxi service, covering areas such as conduct and performance expected of taxi

drivers, customer service attitude and taxi-related statutory requirements.

The "Hong Kong Taxi Service Guidelines", which focuses on practical and operational aspects, describes the responsibilities of and matters to note for taxi drivers as well as the conduct of and matters to note for other stakeholders, such as taxi owners, agents and passengers. Some practical information about taxi services is also provided for taxi drivers and passengers in the guidelines.

At the promulgation event today, the taxi trade and drivers joined a signing ceremony to show their support for compliance with the new standard and guidelines. To strengthen publicity and education, the TD will distribute copies of the standard and guidelines to taxi owners, drivers and passengers through various channels (e.g. the dedicated LPG filling stations, taxi trade groups, the TD's licensing offices and District Offices of the Home Affairs Department) starting from today.

The new standard and guidelines are also available at the websites of the TD ([www.td.gov.hk/filemanager/en/content\\_276/guidebook\(final\).pdf](http://www.td.gov.hk/filemanager/en/content_276/guidebook(final).pdf)) and the CTSQ ([www.ctsq.org.hk/eng/pub/pub.html](http://www.ctsq.org.hk/eng/pub/pub.html)) for browsing and downloading by the public.

