

Transcript of remarks by SEN

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, after the meeting with members of the trade on the preparation work for the implementation of the Producer Responsibility Scheme on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment today (July 27):

Reporter: Mr Wong, did the trade raise any fresh concern with you at this late stage given it's just a few days away from implementation? And secondly, it is supposed to be a producer responsibility scheme. How are you going to ensure that it does not turn into a consumer responsibility scheme?

Secretary for the Environment: Firstly, you mentioned the name "PRS", producer responsibility scheme. I think we have to understand that the term "producer", under the PRS, not only means the manufacturers. It actually and theoretically includes producers, companies importing the appliances, retailers and consumers. All of them are part of the producers of e-waste, or equivalent, and they have to somehow share the burden or expenses for environmental benefits. But to what extent they are sharing will depend on the commercial decision. In a competitive environment, the price of a product depends on various factors. Based on overseas experience, commercial decision will finally decide how the expenses will be shared.

Regarding the meeting, as I have said in my opening remarks, we have been keeping close contact with the trade in the past years. For instance, since late last year, we have already had a pilot scheme with certain retailers to implement and try out the Removal Service Trial Scheme. They have accumulated the experience and we have been in close contact with them to pave the way for rolling out this PRS. The meeting with them today is to keep me and all of us updated about what the Government is doing, what the WEEE&PARK is planning to do, and any particular response from retailers. In general, they are reiterating their support for the PRS. We understand that time is needed for the trade and the public to adapt to the changes regarding the implementation of this PRS. I think it is a good timing for us to have the meeting. At the same time, they requested for more meetings after August 1 so that all of us can keep updated and see how we can do something extra to ensure that everything runs smoothly.

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

Outbound Travel Alert System extended to cover 88 countries and regions

The coverage of the Outbound Travel Alert (OTA) System has today (July

27) been extended to include Kazakhstan, Mauritius and Mongolia, increasing the number of countries and regions covered by the System from 85 to 88.

A Security Bureau spokesperson said, "The Security Bureau regularly reviews the coverage of the OTA System. Following a recent review, the Security Bureau decided to extend the OTA System to Kazakhstan, Mauritius and Mongolia, which are increasingly popular as tourist and business destinations for Hong Kong residents. It brings the OTA coverage from 85 countries and regions to 88, providing Hong Kong residents with information on the outbound travel safety risks of more places."

The spokesperson reminded Hong Kong residents to make reference to the Security Bureau's mobile app "Safeguard HK" and OTA webpage (www.sb.gov.hk/eng/ota/) before travel. Residents outside Hong Kong who need assistance may call the 24-hour hotline (852) 1868 of the Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit of the Immigration Department.

[SHA attends closing ceremony of youth internship programmes in Beijing \(with photos\)](#)

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, attended the closing ceremony of the Fin Society's internship programmes in Beijing today (July 27). He also visited Hong Kong youths participating in the internship programmes of the International Youth Legal Exchange Federation.

Mr Lau said, "The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government strives to explore diversified development opportunities for Hong Kong youths to realise their goals. One of the key areas of work is to encourage and support young people to join internship programmes on the Mainland. The Government launched the Funding Scheme for Youth Internship in the Mainland in 2014-15."

Since the launch of the Funding Scheme for Youth Internship in the Mainland, it has subsidised 460 projects and about 14 000 Hong Kong youths have benefited from the scheme. The Fin Society has received subsidies from the Funding Scheme for Youth Internship in the Mainland to organise finance-themed internship programmes in Beijing since 2016-17, benefiting more than 150 youths. The International Youth Legal Exchange Federation began organising legal-themed internship programmes this year and more than 100 youths have benefited from the programmes.

Mr Lau will accompany the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, to watch a

children's Cantonese opera performance by the Sing Fai Cantonese Opera Promotion Association from Hong Kong tonight. The performance is part of a Chinese opera show that brings together different local opera performances from across the nation. Mr Lau will return to Hong Kong tomorrow morning (July 28).



Meetings of Legislative Council committees

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

No open or closed meetings of the Legislative Council (LegCo) committees will be held in the LegCo Complex during the week from July 30 to August 3.

Update on number of dengue fever cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (July 27) reported the latest number of cases of dengue fever (DF), and again urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

From July 20 to 26, the CHP recorded three confirmed DF cases. The patients had been to Cambodia, India and Indonesia (one case each) during the incubation period.

As of yesterday (July 26), 51 cases had been confirmed this year, all of which were imported cases. The cases were mainly imported from Thailand (21), the Philippines (10) and Cambodia (seven).

DF remains endemic in some areas in Asia and beyond. In Guangdong, there were 100 cases, including 18 local cases, as of July 23 this year, which is 38 per cent higher than that in the corresponding period last year. The latest figures for 2018 reveal that 35 754 cases have been recorded in Thailand and 1 560 in Singapore (since December 31, 2017). Five local cases have been recorded to date in Taiwan in 2018.

The public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;
- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor activities.

To reduce the risk of infections spread by mosquitoes, apart from [general measures](#), travellers returning from affected areas should apply insect repellent for 14 days (DF) or at least 21 days (Zika virus infection) upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to the doctor. DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Re-apply only when needed and follow the instructions.

* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

The public may refer to the CHP's [tips for using insect repellents](#) for details.