

Government makes "restriction-testing declaration" and issues compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Yee Yip House, Tsing Yi Estate, Tsing Yi

The Government today (May 22) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" (declaration) effective from 5pm under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Tsing Yi (i.e. Yee Yip House, Tsing Yi Estate, Tsing Yi, excluding the non-domestic units on G/F and the podium level, see Annex) are required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. The Government aims at finishing this exercise at around noon tomorrow (May 23). The operation may be extended depending on test results.

A Government spokesman said, "Under Cap. 599J, the Government can, according to the needs of infection control, make a 'restriction-testing declaration'. Having reviewed a basket of factors, including the viral load in sewage, the information of relevant positive cases, and other circumstantial factors, and conducted a risk assessment, the Government decided to make another 'restriction-testing declaration' for the relevant area."

The Government will set up temporary specimen collection stations at the "restricted area" and request persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 11.30pm today. Arrangements will be made for persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo a nucleic acid test at specimen collection stations where dedicated staff will collect samples through combined nasal and throat swabs. Persons subject to compulsory testing must stay at their place of residence until all test results are ascertained to avoid cross-infection risk. The Government will make arrangement to facilitate specimen collection for people with impaired mobility. All persons in the "restricted area" who have tested positive in the past 14 days, including positive cases identified either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests that have been self-declared to the DH, are not required to undergo testing in this compulsory testing exercise.

The Government spokesman said, "We understand that this exercise will cause inconvenience to the public. The Government has made arrangements to carry out testing for all persons present in the 'restricted area' as soon as

possible. The aim is to strive to complete testing of all identified persons subject to compulsory testing and confirm the results, and finish the exercise at around noon tomorrow. The Government will make a public announcement when the declaration expires officially. In the cases in which employees are unable to go to work because of the declaration, the Government hopes their employers can exercise discretion and not deduct the salaries or benefits of the employees."

If staying in the "restricted area" will cause unreasonable hardship to individuals who are not residents in the area when the declaration takes effect, government officers may exercise discretion and allow that person to leave the area after considering the individual circumstances. That person must have followed the instructions to undergo testing and leave his/her personal information for contact purposes.

According to the compulsory testing notice to be issued today, any persons other than those specified above who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from May 16 to 22, 2022, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, must undergo compulsory testing on or before May 24, 2022. As a mutant strain is involved, for prudence's sake, vaccinated persons and persons who have recently been tested are also required to undergo testing.

The Government will provide food packs for persons subject to compulsory testing, so as to facilitate the meal arrangements of some persons subject to compulsory testing. The Innovation and Technology Bureau and its departments have set up a hotline (Tel: 6040 6392) which started operation at 5pm today for residents restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance. The Social Welfare Department will also provide assistance to the affected persons.

The Government appeals to persons subject to compulsory testing for their full co-operation by registering and undergoing testing, and waiting for the results patiently at home. The Government will strictly follow up on whether the persons concerned have complied with the compulsory testing notices and "restriction-testing declaration". Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory testing notices commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$10,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the compulsory testing order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Government follows up on positive

results of sewage surveillance and appeals to residents to undergo virus testing

The Government announced today (May 22) that in order to fight the coronavirus epidemic, the Environmental Protection Department and the Drainage Services Department have been collecting sewage samples for virus testing in all districts, and had detected positive results in some areas, indicating that there may be hidden cases in the premises within these areas.

Rapid test

As regards positive sewage testing results with relatively high viral loads in the following areas, the Housing Department and the respective District Offices will commence distributing about 170 000 sets of the COVID-19 rapid antigen test (RAT) kits to residents, cleaning workers and property management staff working in the following areas for them to take the test on their own, in order to help identify infected persons:

- Tuen Mun District – Leung King Estate, Tin King Estate and Po Tin Estate
- Sai Kung District – Residence Oasis and La Cite Noble
- Islands District – Ying Tung Estate

Members of the public may refer to (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/rat/eng/rat.html) for enquiries relating to the use of the RAT kits.

When using an RAT kit, please pay attention to and follow the instructions from the manufacturer to perform the test and read the result properly. It is advisable to record the displayed result by taking a photo immediately after reading. Users should wash their hands before and after performing the tests, and avoid placing non-essential items within the specimen collection area. After completing the test, wrap and seal all components of the test kit carefully and dispose of them properly. If the household environment is contaminated during the specimen collecting process, disinfection should be conducted with 1 in 49 diluted bleach solution or 70 per cent alcohol.

People who obtained a positive result through an RAT for the first time can report via the online platform "Declaration System for individuals tested positive for COVID-19 using Rapid Antigen Test" (www.chp.gov.hk/ratp). If individuals encounter difficulties using the online platform, they can call the automated system at 183 6119 to register their identification document and telephone number. The Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will contact the relevant person later to finish the report procedure.

[SCED highlights importance of regional economic integration at APEC ministerial meeting \(with photos\)](#)

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, stressed the importance of international cooperation and regional integration for economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic at a discussion session entitled "Living in the COVID-19 and beyond" at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Ministers Responsible for Trade (MRT) Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand today (May 22).

Mr Yau said that two years into the COVID-19 pandemic, the global economy is still grappling with lots of uncertainties and challenges. In these trying times, international cooperation is more important than ever. As APEC policy makers, taking steps to reconnect the Asia-Pacific region is certainly the common priority.

He observed that deepening regional economic integration is the foundation for a resilient and prosperous future. Being a staunch supporter of free trade, Hong Kong strongly believes that free and open trade and investment play a significant role in reconnecting the region, and is keen and ready to join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership to contribute a part to the building of the wider Free Trade Area of Asia-Pacific.

Mr Yau further highlighted the potentials of digital technology to reconnect the region in all dimensions and serve as an instrument to long-term growth and a full-fledged economic recovery. He mentioned Hong Kong's plan to set up a Digital Economy Development Committee to accelerate the progress of digital economy, and called on member economies to leverage digital technology to reduce trade costs, facilitate investment and resume cross-border travel.

Mr Yau also urged members to consider incremental steps forward to address new and emerging environmental goods and further the discussions around environmental services, remarking APEC's role as a pioneer in stimulating trade collaboration to pursue sustainability objectives.

On the sidelines of the meeting, Mr Yau met with the Vice Minister of Foreign Trade of Peru, Ms Ana Cecilia Gervasi. Both sides agreed to initiate exploratory talks on a possible bilateral Free Trade Agreement.

He also met with the Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade of Vietnam, Mr Tran Quoc Khanh, to exchange views on issues of mutual concerns.

Mr Yau will return to Hong Kong this evening.



[Speech by SCED at APEC MRT Meeting discussion session on Living in COVID-19 and beyond \(English only\)](#)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, at the discussion session entitled "Living in the COVID-19 and beyond" of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Ministers Responsible for Trade (MRT) Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand today (May 22):

Honourable Chair (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Commerce of Thailand, Mr Jurin Laksanawisit), fellow Ministers, two years into the COVID-19 pandemic, the global economy is still grappling with lots of uncertainties and challenges. But the fight must go on. We believe that without winning the battle against COVID, we can't bring back economic recovery. In these trying times, international cooperation is more important than ever. As APEC policy makers, taking steps to reconnect the Asia-Pacific region is certainly our common priority.

First, as a champion of free trade, Hong Kong, China strongly believes that free and open trade and investment play a significant role in reconnecting the region as we seek to lift our economy out of the gloom. During our discussion with ABAC (APEC Business Advisory Council) yesterday, it is recognised that deepening regional economic integration is the foundation for a resilient and prosperous future. With Hong Kong, China's firm commitment to forging high-quality and comprehensive free trade agreements, we commend a swift and successful implementation of RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) that brings 15 Asia-Pacific economies closer to each other, and indeed they step forward in bringing closer to our common goal of establishing the Free Trade Area of Asia-Pacific. With that mission in mind, Hong Kong, China is also keen and ready to join RCEP to contribute our part.

The pandemic further highlights the urgent need for collaborative efforts to address the supply chain chokepoints and build up resilience against future shocks. Hong Kong, China welcomes the Annex to the MRT Statement which establishes a common definition of logistics-related services to facilitate rules-making in this important services trade category. We also look forward to accelerating the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) and other voluntary trade facilitating measures that go beyond the realms of the TFA.

Second, we should harness the full potentials of digital technology to reconnect the region in all dimensions. Specifically, we need to further leverage digital technology to reduce trade costs, facilitate investment and resume cross-boundary travel. Digitalisation is instrumental to long-term growth and a full-fledged economic recovery.

On the multilateral front, Hong Kong, China would like to stress again the utmost importance of extending, if not making permanent, the WTO moratorium on customs duties on electronic transmissions, to provide a predictable e-commerce environment. As to cross-border travel, APEC launched work on safe passage this year, and we are glad to see a handful of innovative proposals supported by digital technology on the table. Hong Kong, China stands ready to support APEC's good efforts in this regard. Domestically, we will also set up a Digital Economy Development Committee to accelerate the progress of digital economy.

Third, we should not lose sight of our responsibility to care for our planet. The pandemic reminds us that we need to take care of both human

health as well as our planet's health. In addition to the 2012 APEC List of Environmental Goods, time is ripe for us to consider incremental steps forward to address new and emerging environmental goods, and further the discussions around environmental services. APEC has always been a pioneer in stimulating trade collaboration to pursue sustainability objectives, and should continue to serve as an incubator of ideas to give impetus to the rules-based negotiations on the WTO front.

Undoubtedly, the pandemic has dealt a heavy blow to us all, but there is a silver lining. As we try to walk out of the pandemic, we will become hopefully more open, connected and balanced, just as our dear host Thailand suggests in the theme of this APEC year, bringing about a better, healthier and safer environment for us and future generations.

Thank you.

Government announces latest situation of fresh food supply from Mainland

A Government spokesman announced today (May 22) that the supply of fresh food from the Mainland yesterday (May 21) was sufficient and stable.

According to the latest information, the quantity of vegetables supplied from the Mainland to Hong Kong yesterday (as of midnight) by land and water transportation was about 2 400 tonnes, comparable to the average daily supply from the Mainland on a normal day. The volume of vegetables sold through the wholesale markets of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and the Vegetable Marketing Organization was about 852 tonnes. The average wholesale prices of choi sum and pak choi stood at \$5.90 and \$6.10 per catty respectively yesterday, comparable to their average daily wholesale prices last year. The supply of eggs to the wholesale market was normal, with the average daily supply standing at over 2.7 million for the past week.

The total supply of chilled meat from the Mainland yesterday was about 39 tonnes. The supply of live pigs was plentiful.

The supply of chilled poultry from the Mainland was about 170 000 head yesterday, and about 10 000 live chickens were slaughtered locally. The supply was abundant.

Regarding the rice supply, in compliance with the requirement by the Government, stockholders of rice have to maintain the reserve stock of rice at a level sufficient for consumption by the local population for 15 days. The trade generally stocks double the required amount, which is sufficient for one month's consumption by Hong Kong citizens. In recent years, the import and consumption of rice in Hong Kong has stood at a steady level of

around 320 000 to 330 000 tonnes per year. The import quantity (including reserve stock) as of end-March 2022 was 27 300 tonnes. Suppliers also maintain a reserve for food that can be stored, such as frozen meat, for around three months' stock generally.

The Government will continue to maintain close liaison with the Mainland authorities and major food suppliers to ensure a stable food supply.

The AFCD updates and publishes the fresh food supply information daily. Members of the public may visit the AFCD website for updates on daily supplies and wholesale prices of fresh food(www.afcd.gov.hk/english/agriculture/agr_fresh/agr_fresh.html).