

Cross-boundary passenger traffic estimation and arrangements announced for Easter and Ching Ming festive period

The Immigration Department (ImmD) estimates that around 11 million passengers (including Hong Kong residents and visitors) will pass through Hong Kong's sea, land and air control points during the upcoming Easter and Ching Ming festive period (from March 28 to April 7). The ImmD, in consultation with the Shenzhen General Station of Exit and Entry Frontier Inspection, estimates that around 9.5 million passengers will pass through land boundary control points. The number of outbound passengers and inbound passengers using land boundary control points will be relatively higher on March 29 (Friday) and April 1 (Monday), with around 601 000 passengers and 589 000 passengers respectively.

The ImmD estimates that the passenger traffic at the Lo Wu Control Point, the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line Control Point and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Control Point will be heavy, with a daily average forecast of about 207 000, 169 000 and 143 000 passengers respectively.

To cope with the anticipated heavy traffic during the festive period, the ImmD has minimised leave for frontline officers for the flexible deployment and operation of extra clearance counters and kiosks. Additional security guards will also be deployed to provide crowd management support.

Furthermore, the ImmD, the Police, the Customs and Excise Department and the MTR Corporation Limited will set up a joint command centre at the Lo Wu Control Point to make the necessary arrangements. The ImmD will also establish close communication with the Mainland authorities, such as the Shenzhen General Station of Exit and Entry Frontier Inspection. To ensure a smooth passenger traffic flow, passenger conditions will be closely monitored and appropriate traffic diversion plans will be adopted as necessary.

To avoid congestion and a longer than usual waiting time for immigration clearance, the ImmD advises all land boundary passengers to plan in advance, avoid making their journeys during busy periods and keep track of radio and TV broadcasts on traffic conditions at various control points. The expected busy times at boundary control points are available on the website of the ImmD at www.immd.gov.hk. Furthermore, passengers may also check the estimated waiting times at each land boundary control point at any time or place via the Immigration Mobile Application (ImmD Mobile App). They can then plan their trips effectively and save time queuing at control points. The ImmD Mobile App can be downloaded free of charge from the Apple App Store (supports iOS version 11.0 or above), Google Play (supports Android version 8.0 or above), Huawei AppGallery (supports Android version 8.0 or above) and

the APK file available on the ImmD website. Passengers can download the ImmD Mobile App by scanning the QR code (see Annex) or via the ImmD website, www.immd.gov.hk. In addition, information on public transport services to and from various control points is available on the Transport Department website at www.td.gov.hk.

For travellers making journeys to the Mainland, the ImmD reminds them to carry their proof of identity and valid travel documents for crossing the boundary. Hong Kong residents should also check the validity of their Home Visit Permits. Non-permanent residents must carry their valid smart identity card as well as their Document of Identity for Visa Purposes or valid travel document.

Holders of the acknowledgement receipt issued due to reported loss or replacement of their Hong Kong identity cards, or children under 11 years old who hold Hong Kong identity cards, should carry a valid travel document or Re-entry Permit.

About 700 e-Channels have been installed at various control points. Hong Kong residents enrolled for the Express e-Channel should re-enrol if they have been issued with a new identity card. Furthermore, the Contactless e-Channel service is available at all control points now. All eligible Hong Kong residents, after enrolment, can generate an encrypted QR code through the Contactless e-Channel mobile application to enter the e-Channel, and then verify their identity with the facial verification technology for automated immigration clearance.

In addition, all control points have introduced self-service departures for visitors to Hong Kong (Smart Departure) which provides greater travel convenience for visitors. The service employs facial recognition technology for identity verification, which allows eligible visitors holding electronic travel documents to perform self-service departure clearance through Smart Departure e-Channels without prior enrolment.

Hong Kong residents who require assistance while travelling outside Hong Kong may call the 24-hour hotline of the Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit of the ImmD at (852) 1868.