

## DH conducts joint operation with Police against smoking in no smoking areas

To echo the Quit in June campaign launched by the Department of Health (DH) to call on smokers to attempt to quit smoking in order to reduce their risk of tobacco-related diseases and death, the DH's Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office (TACO) conducted a joint operation in plain clothes with the Police against smoking offence in no smoking areas in different places across the territory for three consecutive days from June 9 to 11.

Under the Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance (Cap.371) (the Ordinance), conducting a smoking act in statutory no smoking areas (such as indoor areas of bar or restaurants) is prohibited. Any person doing a smoking act in statutory no smoking areas commits an offence and is liable to a fixed penalty of \$1,500. Venue managers of statutory no smoking areas are empowered by the Ordinance to request the smoking offender to cease the act; and if the offender is not co-operative, he/she may contact the Police for assistance.

During the operation, 83 places of public entertainment were visited by inspectors from the DH and the Police in plain clothes, and 64 fixed penalty notices were issued to persons smoking in no smoking areas.

A DH spokesman stressed that the TACO will follow up and investigate every complaint about illegal smoking and will conduct inspections and take enforcement actions in the venue concerned. It will also conduct joint inspections and enforcement actions (including plain-clothes operation) with other law enforcement agencies from time to time with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement. The DH will continue to closely monitor and to take stringent enforcement actions to tackle illegal smoking.

"The Government appeals to smokers to quit smoking as early as possible for their own health and that of others. They are encouraged to call the DH's Integrated Smoking Cessation Hotline on 1833 183. The hotline is operated by registered nurses, providing professional counselling services on smoking cessation," the spokesman said.

Smokers can visit the smoking cessation thematic website [www.livetobaccofree.hk](http://www.livetobaccofree.hk) for more information on quitting and the available supporting tools and services. They can also download the "Quit Smoking App" to keep track of their progress in quitting and get tips to deal with cravings so as to stay tobacco-free.