

Entry restriction on non-Hong Kong residents coming from overseas extended

A Government spokesman said today (April 6) that the Government will extend, until further notice, the entry restriction on non-Hong Kong residents coming from overseas countries or regions by plane and those having been to overseas countries or regions in the past 14 days preceding arrival at Hong Kong. All transit services at the Hong Kong International Airport will also continue to be suspended until further notice.

The COVID-19 pandemic has proliferated around the world and the situation is severe. After consideration by the key members of the Anti-Epidemic Steering Committee cum Command Centre, the Government announced on March 23 enhancements to the anti-epidemic measures in four aspects, including the following measures on entry restriction, quarantine and airport transit which aim to prevent imported cases:

- All non-Hong Kong residents coming from overseas countries and regions by plane will be denied entry to Hong Kong;
- Non-Hong Kong residents coming from the Mainland, Macao and Taiwan will be denied entry to Hong Kong if they have been to any overseas countries and regions in the past 14 days;
- All transit services at Hong Kong International Airport will be suspended; and
- All travellers coming from Macao and Taiwan, including Hong Kong and non-Hong Kong residents, will be subject to a 14-day compulsory quarantine, which is the same as the arrangements for people entering Hong Kong from the Mainland.

The above measures have been implemented with effect from 00:00am on March 25. The entry restriction and suspension of transit services at the airport were at the time to be implemented tentatively for 14 days, ending on April 7.

At present, the COVID-19 pandemic remains severe around the globe. As of this morning, the number of cases reported globally had exceeded 1.18 million. As for the situation in Hong Kong, the number of confirmed cases as at 4 pm today had reached 915 (including one probable case), more than double the number of 357 confirmed cases a fortnight ago. Over the past two weeks, around 75 per cent of the confirmed cases are either with travel history during the incubation period or being close contacts of such cases. In view of the latest situation, the Government has decided to extend the aforementioned entry restriction and suspension of airport transit services until further notice.

In implementing the above entry restriction measures, the Government has taken into consideration the practical need and exempted a small number of

persons. Such exemptions would remain applicable, including:

- Crew members of aircraft who need to commute to and from foreign places for performance of necessary duties or crew members of goods vessels;
- Government officials carrying out government duties including personnel of consular posts;
- Personnel engaged in anti-epidemic work endorsed by the HKSAR Government; and
- Spouses and minor children of Hong Kong residents.

On April 5, there were only 813 passenger arrivals via the Airport, a drop of nearly 82 per cent as compared with the number before the implementation of the above measures on March 24. Among them, only seven arrivals were non-Hong Kong residents.