

Ferry Services (Amendment) Bill 2018 gazetted

The Ferry Services (Amendment) Bill 2018 was gazetted today (June 15).

As currently required under section 29 of the Ferry Services Ordinance (Cap. 104), the maximum duration of a licence, whether newly granted or extended, is three years on each occasion, whilst the aggregate licence period (i.e. including any extended period(s)) shall not exceed 10 years. This requirement not only creates administrative burden on ferry operators (increasing the number of applications for licence extension under a 10-year period), but also hampers ferry operators' ability to make longer-term planning and investment for their ferry services to a certain extent.

"The Bill seeks to lengthen the period for which a licence to operate a ferry service may be granted and extended, from three years to five years, while the existing cap of a 10-year aggregate licence period remains unchanged. We hope that the proposal could facilitate ferry operators' longer-term planning and investment, and in turn enhance the financial viability of ferry services and encourage continuous improvement of service quality," a Government spokesman said.

The Bill will be introduced into the Legislative Council on June 27.