

# Ferry Services (Amendment) Ordinance 2018 comes into effect

The Transport Department (TD) announced that the Ferry Services (Amendment) Ordinance 2018 became effective today (November 23).

A spokesman for the TD said that ferry service licences are granted by the Commissioner for Transport, in accordance with section 28 of the Ferry Services Ordinance (Ordinance) (Cap 104), to the licensees for the operations of ferry services. According to section 29 of the amended Ordinance, licences, whether newly granted or extended, may be granted for a maximum period of five years on each occasion, and the aggregate licence period (i.e. including all extended period(s)) shall not exceed 10 years.

The relaxation of the cap on the licence period for newly granted licences and extended licences on each occasion, from the original three years to five years, aims at encouraging and facilitating ferry operators to make longer term planning and investment with a view to improving the financial viability of ferry services and service quality.

The spokesman added that regarding applications for extension of current licences, licensees may consider whether to make application for a longer licence period while their licences are in force. For applications for licence extension submitted to the TD before the effective date (i.e. November 23, 2018) of the amended Ordinance, the licensees concerned may consider whether to maintain the licence periods of their original applications or to make applications to the TD for revising their applications for a longer licence period. However, it should be noted that the aggregate licence period (i.e. including all extended period(s)) shall not exceed 10 years. The TD will handle the applications according to the established procedures.