

HAD and Immigration Department conducted joint operation in Sham Shui Po (with photo)

The Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA) of the Home Affairs Department (HAD) today (October 10) conducted a joint operation with the Immigration Department to inspect premises in Sham Shui Po that was suspected of operating unlicensed bedspace apartment so as to ensure the safety of the general public.

A spokesman for the HAD said, "During the operation, the OLA found one premises that was suspected of operating unlicensed guesthouse/bedspace apartment. The OLA will follow up this case and will initiate prosecution if there is sufficient evidence after completion of the investigation."

The spokesman stressed, "Operating an unlicensed hotel/guesthouse or bedspace apartment is a criminal offence and it can lead to imprisonment as well as a criminal record upon conviction. According to the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance, an offender of an unlicensed hotel/guesthouse is liable to a maximum fine of \$500,000 and three years' imprisonment, and a fine of \$20,000 for each day during which the offence continues. A six-month closure order may also be issued for the hotel/guesthouse involved in a repeated offence. Meanwhile, according to the Bedspace Apartments Ordinance, an offender of an unlicensed bedspace apartment is liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000 and two years' imprisonment, and a fine of \$20,000 for each day during which the offence continues. "

Tourists and members of the public can make use of the search functions on the OLA's website to check whether the hotel/guesthouse and bedspace apartment concerned is licensed or not. Any suspected unlicensed hotel/guesthouse or bedspace apartment should be reported to the OLA by the hotline (Tel: 2881 7498), by email (hadlaeng@had.gov.hk), by fax (2504 5805), or through the mobile application "Hong Kong Licensed Hotels and Guesthouses".

