

Inter-departmental drill on emergency response to flooding in Tai O (with photos)

The Islands District Office (IsDO), in collaboration with relevant government departments and local organisations, conducted a rescue and evacuation drill today (May 10) to enhance their and residents' preparedness in the event of serious flooding in Tai O, and to promote residents' understanding of the emergency response arrangements.

Participating in the drill were the IsDO, the Fire Services Department (FSD), the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF), the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO), the Drainage Services Department, the Social Welfare Department (SWD), the Housing Department, the Civil Engineering and Development Department, the Civil Aid Service, the Tai O Rural Committee, the Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council, the Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association Tai O Community Work Office, the Hong Kong Red Cross and the Buddhist Fat Ho Memorial College.

According to the relevant emergency response plan, when the HKO forecasts that the sea level at Tai O would rise to 3.3 metres above chart datum or more in the coming few hours due to the effect of a tropical cyclone, the HKO will issue an alert to relevant government departments, organisations, Tai O resident representatives and fishermen representatives by SMS. Upon receipt of the alert, the IsDO will activate an emergency co-ordination centre at the Tai O Rural Committee Office, jointly set up by the IsDO, the FSD, the HKPF, the SWD, as well as other relevant government departments and non-governmental organisations. The emergency co-ordination centre will co-ordinate any necessary evacuation, rescue and emergency relief efforts for Tai O. The drill simulated the real situation and added unexpected elements to increase the difficulty. Participating departments were required to carry out rescue tasks immediately under unexpected circumstances, posing challenges to their response capabilities.

In addition, upon receipt of the HKO's alert, resident representatives and fishermen representatives in Tai O will help disseminate the information to residents to enable them to stay vigilant for flooding and take refuge in safe locations if necessary. Temporary shelters at the Tai O Rural Committee Office, the Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association Tai O Community Work Office, the Buddhist Fat Ho Memorial College and the Transit Centre situated at Lung Tin Estate will be opened for residents in need.

