

# Labour Importation Scheme for Transport Sector to accept applications from next Monday

To relieve the acute manpower shortage in the aviation industry and the public light bus/coach trade, the Chief Executive in Council has earlier endorsed the introduction of the Labour Importation Scheme for the Transport Sector to suitably allow the relevant sectors to apply for importation of labour, on the prerequisite of safeguarding the employment of local labour. The Scheme will be open for applications from next Monday (July 17). The quota ceilings for the aviation industry and the public light bus/coach trade are 6 300 and 1 700 respectively.

The spokesman for the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB) said, "Industry players have been continually enhancing their local recruitment and training efforts. However, it is still insufficient to plug the manpower gap in the relevant sectors. We need to adopt streamlined procedures to allow industry players to suitably import labour in order to expeditiously support the continual recovery of Hong Kong's aviation industry and maintain the stability of public transport services."

For the aviation industry, the specified job types for which the importation of labour is allowed are those facing the most acute manpower shortage, including passenger services officers, ramp services agents, cabin workers, aircraft maintenance mechanics/technicians, tractor drivers, warehouse operators/cargo handlers, equipment/loader operators, customer services agents, aircraft tug drivers and maintenance technicians. Applicants of the Scheme must be registered business entities which possess a contract/licence/franchise/passenger handling permit with the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) to operate their business at Hong Kong International Airport. Applicants also have to pay the AAHK \$400 per month for each worker imported, while the AAHK will contribute an annual lump sum in an amount of the same magnitude as the total amount paid by employers. The AAHK will fully make use of the payments from the employers and its own contribution for subsidising transport costs of the local frontline staff responsible for airport operation.

The AAHK will organise a briefing for the industry on July 12 to explain the application procedures and operational details of the Scheme. Applicants shall submit the completed application form together with other required documents to the AAHK between July 17 and 30. An interdepartmental liaison group comprising representatives from the TLB, the Labour Department (LD) and the AAHK will consider the applications, and approval decisions will be made by the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Logistics. The approval process will be completed within one month from the date of receipt of applications by the AAHK.

In respect of the public transport services, importation of public light bus/coach drivers is allowed. Passenger Service Licence holders of public light bus/public bus services who wish to apply for importation of drivers shall submit the completed application form together with other required documents to the Transport Department (TD) between July 17 and August 7. An interdepartmental liaison group comprising representatives from the TLB, the TD and the LD will consider the applications, and approval decisions will be made by the Commissioner for Transport. The approval process will be completed within one to two months from the date of receipt of applications by the TD. During the application period, the TD will meet with representatives of the trade to explain the application procedures and operational details, as well as setting up designated enquiry lines to provide one-to-one assistance for prospective applicants. If needed, prospective applicants can also make appointments through designated lines to visit the specified TD offices in person for staff there to assist with the application process.

The TLB, the AAHK and the TD recently met with industry players and labour representatives, and set up respective stakeholder consultative groups. The proposals concerning the two sector-specific schemes mentioned above were introduced, and the views of the stakeholders, including labour representatives, were gauged. The Government and the AAHK will continue to maintain communication with the stakeholders and enhance information dissemination through the relevant consultative groups in order to facilitate the smooth implementation and execution of the Scheme. The implementation progress of the Scheme will also be reported to the Labour Advisory Board on a half-yearly basis.

The application forms and scheme details for the aviation industry and the public light bus/coach trade are uploaded onto the webpages of the TLB ([www.tlb.gov.hk/eng/highlights/transport/labour\\_importation\\_scheme\\_aviation\\_industry.html](http://www.tlb.gov.hk/eng/highlights/transport/labour_importation_scheme_aviation_industry.html)) and the TD ([www.td.gov.hk/en/lispc/index.html](http://www.td.gov.hk/en/lispc/index.html)) respectively. For enquiries, please contact the AAHK at 2188 6603 or the TD at 2804 2600.

Upon the launch of the Scheme, the Supplementary Labour Scheme implemented by the LD will no longer accept applications for importation of labour for the aviation industry and the drivers of road public transport trade covered by the Scheme.