

Marine traffic control and safety measures to be followed at Lunar New Year Fireworks Display

With regard to the 2024 Lunar New Year Fireworks Display to be held on February 11, the Marine Department (MD) will implement marine traffic control and strengthen the inspection of spectator vessels on the event day to ensure that safety requirements are met.

A Closed Area in the waters off the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre in Wan Chai will be established from 2pm to about 10.30pm on the event day where barges for the fireworks display will be anchored. A Restricted Area will be established in the Central Harbour from 7pm to about 9pm on the event day. Other than authorised vessels, no vessels will be allowed to enter these two areas. Scheduled ferry vessels with permission may continue services until 7.40pm.

Spectator vessels could stay inside the Specified Area other than the Restricted Area and the Closed Area for viewing from 6pm to 9pm (specified period) on the event day. To enhance marine safety during a major event at sea, coxswains of spectator vessels in the Specified Area during the specified period must ensure that children on board are accompanied by an adult and wear a lifejacket at all times. Coxswains must also keep a passenger and crew list on board for emergency purposes. The MD will enhance enforcement work and initiate prosecution if any vessel fails to meet with these requirements.

In addition, to ensure vessels disperse in an orderly manner, the Eastern and Western Cordon Lines of the Restricted Area will be lifted in stages after the event. The Western Cordon Line will be lifted first at about 9pm. Spectator vessels behind the Western Cordon Line and those wishing to move to the east must follow the instructions of officers from the MD and the Police at the scene. The Eastern Cordon Line will be lifted later depending on traffic conditions in Victoria Harbour. It is anticipated that the Restricted Area will be lifted by about 9.15pm on the event day.

For landside crowd control, public landing steps at Kowloon Public Pier will be closed temporarily from 6pm to about 9pm while the public landing steps within the Restricted Area will be closed temporarily from 6.30pm to about 9pm. Buffer Zones at Kowloon Public Pier, Kwun Tong Public Pier and Central Piers 9 and 10 will be established immediately after the event for the safe and orderly disembarkation of passengers.

Officers from the MD and the Police will also maintain order at major landing facilities after the event. In order to ensure smooth disembarkation, coxswains and crew members should remind passengers to pack their personal belongings early before the vessels arrive alongside the landing steps, as well as assisting passengers to disembark. Coxswains and passengers should

follow the instructions of the MD and the Police at the scene.

The MD and the Marine Police will also strengthen law enforcement, especially on conditions of life-saving appliances, speeding and overloading. Coxswains and persons-in-charge of vessels should check again and reconfirm that the operating licence, the certificate of survey and the third-party risk insurance are valid before setting sail.

MD Notice No. 26 of 2024 on marine traffic control and safety measures has been issued and is available for viewing on the MD's website (www.mardep.gov.hk).